822.5
Foo/WOr
46617

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016

46617

THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

VOL. II.

THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

WITH

REMARKS ON EACH PLAY,

AND

AN ESSAY

ON THE

LIFE, GENIUS AND WRITINGS OF THE AUTHOR.

BY JON BEE, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE MINOR.
THE LIAR.
THE ORATORS.
THE MAYOR OF GARRAT.
THE PATRON.
THE COMMISSARY.

LONDON:

SHERWOOD, GILBERT, AND PIPER,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1830.

922.5
Foo/xyor
46617

THE

MINOR;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS;

As performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

Tantum Religio potuit suadere Malorum.

REMARKS.

ORIGINALLY produced in Ireland, in *two acts;* this celebrated piece nearly got its *quietus* on the first representation, at Crow-street Theatre, 1760. The audience there could not comprehend the main plot, or contrivance, of Sir William Wealthy; a disrelish for the satire upon the methodists—from whose exertions much party good was then expected, produced the first marks of disapprobation; and, when *Mrs. Cole* complained of the pain in her hip, Woodward's *manner of excruciating* was so broad as to give general disgust. In England the same feeling could not be excited, because that arch-imitator touched upon a very vulgar, but it should seem very generally recognised, saying, respecting the Irish ladies, which none but Twiss (the traveller) ever alluded to—in print; and we, at present, *shall not,* seeing the extreme saline manner in which *the sex* treated *the traveller's* memory, long after the publication of his celebrated journey. On that occasion, the row *began in the boxes!*

Having added the character of *Smirk,* the auctioneer, and a good number of incidents, Mr. Foote brought out the Minor in *three acts,* at Drury-lane Theatre, in 1761: it was here favoura-

bly received, brought thirty-four full houses, and in print has gone through nearly half as many editions. It continues to be a favourite, notwithstanding the apparent incongruity of Sir William Wealthy's conduct, and is frequently performed to respectable audiences, amid continual applause; a proof, by inference, that the cant of methodism is not so generally spread as hath been supposed, although *the party* are tolerably active, and sometimes fervent opponents of the piece. An occasional suspension of this comedy, and at one time, the attempted expulsion of Mother Cole, appear like concessions of the moot point on the part of some trust-worthless deputy of the Muses.

If we are to suppose a *formal* opposition, or enmity, existed between that *cant* and the histrionic muse, most certainly *Whitfield* drew *first blood*, by calling the Theatre the devil's own house; and, in return, methodism *caught a clinker* in the *Minor*, it probably never will get over, but which *the saints* would gladly sink in the shades of forgetfulness,—of which we have some degree of proof in the following circumstance :—

One *Parsons*, a publisher, sent forth, in single plays, the *Minor Theatre*, (short comedies and farces,) among which were Foote's "Acting Pieces;" but Parsons, being a methodist, omitted this comedy—the Minor, as one not fit to be read, and which, he concluded, should be banished the stage. That he subsequently printed it, and afterwards suspended *the sale*, is to be taken as indications of the various conflicts between *conscience* and *mammon*, that so often disturb the minds of more learned wights than *serious* booksellers.

Another anecdote :—early in the century saw

both Theatres in ruins, at which time certain preachers had anathematised all theatrical performances pretty warmly. The morning after the Drury-lane conflagration, we met one of the performers, Mr. Charlemont, who feelingly deplored the unaccountable destruction of "our house," (as he called it,) adding, "and is it to be wondered at, sir, seeing that the methodists have been preaching *at it* these twelve months? Egad, I am in hopes we shall re-open with the Minor, and then they'll give *Sir George* to me."

The whole of his prelude, or introduction, seems to have been got up as an apology for *Foote's* performing Mrs. *Cole* himself, and perhaps for his *personalities* in other respects. Indeed, he had good reasons for taking a *new view* of what ought to be considered legitimate satire, in the circumstance of Weston, his *élève*, having *taken off* his master—apparently *with leave*, but really against the grain. The avowal of his birth, parentage, and progress to the boards, made by *Shift*, in Act I. was meant for *Weston*, though he averred the colouring was too high. The situations in which Lucy and Sir George are thrown are very fine, although they prepare the reader too soon for the coming catastrophe; from her lips, truths, painful truths, of every-day occurrence are told, and give rise to pathetic feelings in all genuine hearts.

TO HIS GRACE

WILLIAM DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,

Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's Household.

My Lord,

The Minor, who is indebted for his appearance on *the stage* to your Grace's indulgence, begs leave to desire your further protection, at his entering into *the world.*

Though the allegiance due from the whole dramatic people to your Grace's station, might place this address in the light of a *natural tribute;* yet, my Lord, I should not have taken that liberty with the Duke of Devonshire, if I could not, at the same time, plead some little *utility* in the design of my piece; and add, that the public approbation has stamped a value on the execution.

The law, which threw the stage under the absolute government of a lord chamberlain, could not fail to fill the minds of all the objects of that power with very gloomy apprehensions; they found themselves (through their own licentiousness, it must be confessed) in a more precarious dependent state, than any other of his Majesty's subjects. But, when their direction was lodged in the hands of a nobleman, whose ancestors had

so successfully struggled for national liberty, they ceased to fear for their own. It was not from a *patron of the liberal arts* they were to expect an oppressor; it was not from the friend of freedom, and of man, they were to dread partial monopolies or the establishment of petty tyrannies.

Their warmest wishes are accomplished; none of their rights have been invaded, except what, without the first poetic authority, I should not venture to call a right—the *jus nocendi.*

Your tenderness, my Lord, for all the followers of *the muses,* has been in no instance more conspicuous than in your late favour to me, the meanest of their train; your Grace has thrown open (for those who are denied admittance into the palaces of *Parnassus)* a cottage on its borders, where the unhappy migrants may be, if not magnificently, at least, hospitably entertained.

I shall detain your Grace no longer, than just to echo the public voice, that, for the honour, progress, and perfection of letters, your Grace may long continue their candid *censor,* who have always been their generous *protector.*

I have the honour, my Lord, to be, with the greatest respect and gratitude,

Your Grace's most dutiful,
most obliged
and obedient servant,
SAMUEL FOOTE.

Ellestre, July 8, 1760.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PERSONS IN THE INTRODUCTION.

FOOTE,
CANKER,
SMART,
PEARSE.

IN THE COMEDY, *(upon its revival.)*

SIR WILLIAM WEALTHY.....*Mr. Baddeley.*
MR. RICHARD WEALTHY.....*Mr. Wrighten.*
SIR GEORGE WEALTHY .....*Mr. Aickin.*
SHIFT.....*Mr. Bannister.*
LOADER .....*Mr. Bransby.*
DICK .....*Mr. Burton.*
TRANSFER .....*Mr. Parsons.*
SMIRK .....*Mr. Bannister.*
The BARON, *assumed* .....*Mr. Baddeley.*
MRS. COLE.....*Mr. Bannister.*
LUCY .....*Miss Hopkins.*

SCENE—At first the Theatre; subsequently, the scene is laid at some Coffee-house near it.

THE

MINOR;

INTRODUCTION.

Enter CANKER *and* SMART.

Smart. But are you sure he has *leave?*

Cank. Certain.

Smart. I am damned glad on't. For, now we shall have a laugh either *with him*, or *at him*, it does not signify which.

Cank. Not a farthing.

Smart. Do you know his scheme?

Cank. Not I. But is not the door of the *Little Theatre* open?*

Smart. Yes. Who is that fellow that seems to stand sentry there?

Cank. By his tattered garb and meagre visage, he must be one of the troop.

Smart. I'll call him. Holo, Mister ———

* *Little Theatre.* The Haymarket.

Enter PEARSE.

What, is there any thing going on over the way?

Pearse. A rehearsal.

Smart. Of what?

Pearse. A new piece.

Smart. Foote's?

Pearse. Yes.

Cank. Is he there?

Pearse. He is.

Smart. 'Zounds, let's go and see what he is about.

Cank. With all my heart.

Smart. Come along, then. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FOOTE *and an* ACTOR.

Foote. Sir, this will never do? you must get rid of your high notes, and country cant. Oh, 'tis the true strolling ———

Enter SMART *and* CANKER.

Smart. Ha, ha, ha! what, hard at it, my boy! ——— Here's your old friend Canker and I come for a peep. Well, and hey, what is your plan?

Foote. Plan?

Smart. Aye; what are your characters? Give us your group? how is your cloth filled?

Foote. Characters?

Smart. Aye—Come, come, *communicate.* Why, man, we will lend thee a lift. I have a damned fine original for thee; an aunt of my own, just come from the North, with the true *Newcastle burr* in her throat; and a *nose* and a *chin!*—I am afraid she is not well enough known: but I have a remedy for that. I'll bring her the first night of

your piece, place her in a conspicuous station, and whisper the secret to the whole house. That will be damned fine, wo'n't it?

Foote. Oh, delicious!

Smart. But don't name *me.* For, if she smokes me for the author, I shall be dashed out of her [last will and] codicil in a hurry.

Foote. Oh, never fear me. But I should think your *uncle Tom* a better character.

Smart. What, the politician?

Foote. Aye; he that every day, after dinner, as soon as the cloth is removed, fights the battle of Minden, batters the French with cherry-stones, and pursues 'em to the banks of the Rhine in a stream of spilt port.

Smart. Oh, damn it, he'll *do.*

Foote. Or, what say you to your father-in-law, Sir Timothy? who, though as broken-winded as a Hounslow post-horse, is eternally chaunting Venetian ballads. *Kata tora cara higlia.*

Smart. Admirable! by heavens!—Have you got 'em?

Foote. No.

Smart. Then in with 'em my boy.

Foote. Not one.

Smart. Pr'ythee why not?

Foote. Why, look-ye, Smart; though you are, in the language of the world, my *friend,* yet there is one thing you, I am sure, love better than any body.

Smart. What's that?

Foote. Mischief?

Smart. No, pr'ythee ——

Foote. How, now, am I sure that you, who so readily give up your relations, may not have some design upon *me?*

Smart. I don't understand you.

Foote. Why, as soon as my characters begin to circulate a little successfully, my mouth is stopped in a minute, by the clamour of your relations;—"oh, damme,—'tis a shame,—it should not be,—people of distinction brought upon the stage!"—And so, out of compliment to your cousins, I am to be beggared for treating the public with the follies of your family, at your own request.

Smart. How can you think I would be such a dog? What the devil, then, are we to have nothing personal? Give us *the actors*, however.

Foote. Oh, that's stale. Besides, I think they have, of all men, the best [*most*] right to complain.

Smart. How so?

Foote. Because, by rendering them ridiculous in their *profession*, you, at the same time, injure their *pockets*. Now, as to the other gentry, they have, providentially, something besides their understanding to rely on; and the only injury they can receive is, that the whole town is then diverted with what was before only the amusement of private parties.

Cank. Give us then a *national portrait:* a Scotchman or an Irishman.

Foote. If you mean merely the dialect of the two countries, I cannot think it either a subject of satire or of humour. It [*The brogue*] is an accidental unhappiness, for which a man is no more accountable, than for the colour of his hair. Now, *affectation* I take to be the true comic object. If, indeed, a *North Briton*, struck with a scheme of reformation, should advance from the banks of the Tweed, to teach the English the true pronun-

ciation of their own language,* he would, I think, merit your laughter: nor, would a Dublin mechanic, who, from heading the liberty-boys in a skirmish on *Ormond-Quay*, should think he had a right to prescribe military laws to the first commander in Europe, be a less ridiculous object.

Smart. Are there such?

Foote. If you mean that the blunders of a few peasants, or the partial principles of a single scoundrel, are to stand as characteristic marks of a *whole country*, your pride may produce a laugh, but, believe me, it would be at the expense of your understanding.

Cank. Heydey, what a system is here! Laws for laughing! And pray, sage sir, instruct us when we may laugh *with propriety?*

Foote. At an old beau, a superannuated beauty, a military coward, a stuttering orator, or a gouty dancer. In short, whoever affects to be what he is not, or strives to be what he cannot be, is an object worthy the poet's pen, and your mirth.

Smart. Psha! I don't know what you mean by your is nots, and cannots—damned abstruse jargon, *eh, Canker?*

Cank. Well, but if you will not give us *persons*, let us have *things*. Treat us with a modern amour, and a state intrigue, or a ——

* A thing not uncommon. Poor *English*: it is worthy of remark, even here, that *rules* for pronouncing the language aright have been prescribed to us—in the *dictionary form*—by an Irishman, a Scotchman, a Welshman, and a Frenchman, *seriatim*: T. Sheridan, W. Stewart, (anonymously) St. Jones and W. Salmon! Of J. Walker and Churchill, *non constat.*

Foote. And so amuse the public ear at the expense of private peace. You must excuse me.

Cank. And with these principles, you expect to thrive on the spot?

Smart. No, no, it wo'n't do. I tell thee the plain roast and boiled of the theatres will never do at this table. We must have high seasoned *ragoûts* and rich sauces.

Foote. Why, perhaps, by way of dessert, I may produce something that may hit your palate.

Smart. Your bill of fare?

Foote. What think you of one of those itinerant field orators, who, although at declared enmity with common sense, have the address to poison the principles, and at the same time pick the pockets of half our industrious fellow subjects?

Cank. Have a care. Dangerous ground. *Ludere cum sacris,* you know.

Foote. Now, I look upon it in a different manner. I consider those gentlemen in the light of public performers, like myself; and whether we exhibit at Tottenham-court,* or at the Hay-market, our purpose is the same, and *the place* is immaterial.

Cank. Why, indeed, if it be considered ——

Foote. Nay, more, I must beg leave to assert, that *ridicule* is the only antidote against this pernicious poison. This is a madness that *argument* can never cure; and, should a little wholesome severity be applied, "persecution" would be the immediate cry: *where,* then, can we have recourse, but to the *comic muse?* Perhaps, the archness and

---

* A nest of vehement orators held forth on the *road side,* and where the octagon-chapel now stands.

severity of her smile may redress an evil, that the laws cannot reach, or reason reclaim.

Cank. Why, if it does not cure those already distempered, it may be a means of stopping the infection.

Smart. But how is your scheme conducted?

Foote. Of that you may judge. We are just going upon a repetition [*rehearsal?*] of the piece. I should be glad to have your opinion.

Smart. We will give it you.

Foote. One indulgence [*I crave*]: as you are *Englishmen*, I think I need not beg, that, as from necessity most of my performers are new, you will allow [something] for their inexperience, and encourage their timidity.

Smart. Nought but reasonable.

Foote. Come, then, *prompter*, begin.

Pearse. Lord, sir, we are all at a stand.

Foote. What's the matter?

Pearse. Mrs. O'Schohnesy has returned the part of the bawd; she says she is a gentlewoman, and it would be a reflection on her family to do any such thing!

Foote. Indeed!

Pearse. If it had been only *a whore*, says she, I should not have minded it; because no lady need be ashamed of doing that.

Foote. Well, there is no help for it; but these gentlemen must not be disappointed. Well, I'll do the character myself.

ACT THE FIRST.

SIR WILLIAM WEALTHY *and* MR. RICHARD WEALTHY.

Sir Will. Come, come, brother, I know the world. People who have their attention eternally fixed upon one object, cannot help being a little narrow in their notions.

R. Weal. A sagacious remark that, and highly probable, that we merchants, who maintain a constant correspondence with the four quarters of the world, should know less of it than your fashionable fellows, whose whole experience is bounded by Westminster-bridge.

Sir Will. Nay, brother, as a proof that I am not blind to the benefit of travelling George, you know, has been in Germany these four years.

R. Weal. Where he is well grounded in gaming and gluttony; France has furnished him with fawning and flattery; Italy equipped him with capriols and cantatas: and, thus accomplished, my young gentleman is returned with a cargo of whores, cooks, *valets de chambre*, and fiddlesticks, a most valuable member of the British commonwealth.

Sir Will. You dislike, then, my system of education?

R. Weal. Most sincerely.

Sir Will. The whole?

R. Weal. Every particular.

Sir Will. The early part, I should imagine, might merit your approbation.

R. Weal. Least of all. What, I suppose, be-

cause he has run the gauntlet through a public school, where, at sixteen, he had practised more vices than he would otherwise have heard of at sixty.

Sir Will. Ha, ha, prejudice!

R. Weal. Then, indeed, you removed him to the university; where, lest his morals should be mended, and his understanding improved, you fairly set him free from the restraint of the one, and the drudgery of the other, by the privileged distinction of a silk gown and a velvet cap.

Sir Will. And all these evils, you think, a city education would have prevented?

R. Weal. Doubtlesss.——Proverbs, proverbs, brother William, convey wholesome instruction. Idleness is the root of all evil. Regular hours, constant employment, and good example, cannot fail to form the mind.

Sir Will. Why truly, brother, had you stuck to your old civic vices, hypocrisy, cozenage, and avarice, I don't know whether I might not have committed George to your care; but you cockneys now beat us suburbians at our own weapons. What, old boy, times are changed since the date of thy indentures; when the sleek, crop-eared prentice used to dangle after his mistress, with the great bible under his arm, to St. Bride's, on a Sunday; bring home the text, repeat the divisions of the discourse, dine at twelve, and regale, upon a gaudy day, with buns and beer at Islington, or Mile-End.

R. Weal. Wonderfully facetious!

Sir Will. Our modern lads are of a different metal. They have their gaming-clubs in the garden, their little lodgings, the snug depositories of their rusty swords, and occasional bag-wigs; their

horses for the turf; aye, and their commissions of bankruptcy too, before they are well out of their time.

R. Weal. Infamous aspersion!

Sir Will. But the last meeting at Newmarket, *Lord Lofty* received, at the hazard-table, the identical note from the individual tailor to whom he had paid it but the day before, for a new set of liveries.

R. Weal. Invention!

Sir Will. These are anecdotes you will never meet with in your weekly travels from Cateaton-street to your boarded box in Clapham, brother.

R. Weal. And yet that boarded box, as your prodigal spendthrift proceeds, will soon be the only seat of the family.

Sir Will. May be not. Who knows what a reformation our project may produce!

R. Weal. I do. None at all.

Sir Will. Why so?

R. Weal. Because your means are ill-proportioned to their end. Were he my son, I would serve him ——

Sir Will. As you have done your daughter. Discard him. But consider, I have but one.

R. Weal. That would weigh nothing with me: for, were Charlotte to set up a will of her own, and reject the man of my choice, she must expect to share the fate of her sister. I consider families as a smaller kind of kingdoms, and would have disobedience in the one as severely punished, as rebellion in the other—Cut off both from their respective societies.

Sir Will. Poor Lucy! But surely you begin to relent. Mayn't I intercede?

R. Weal. Look ye, brother, you know my mind.

I will be absolute. If I meddle with the management of your son, it is at your own request; but if, directly or indirectly, you interfere with my banishment of that wilful, headstrong, disobedient hussy, all ties between us are broke; and I shall no more remember you as a brother than I do her as a child.

Sir Will. I have done. But to return. You think there is a probability in my plan?

R. Weal. I shall attend the issue.

Sir Will. You will lend your aid, however?

R. Weal. We shall see how you go on.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. A letter, sir.

Sir Will. Oh, from *Capias*, my attorney. Who brought it?

Ser. The person is without, sir.

Sir Will. Bid him wait. [*Reads.*]

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Worthy Sir,

The bearer is the person I promised to procure. I thought it was proper for you to examine him in viva voce. *So, if you administer a few interrogatories, you will find, by cross-questioning him, whether he is a competent person to prosecute the cause you wot of. I wish you a speedy issue: and as there can be no default in your judgement, am of opinion it should be carried into immediate execution. I am,*

Worthy Sir, &c.

TIMOTHY CAPIAS.

P.S. *The party's name is Samuel Shift. He is an admirable mime, or mimic, and most delectable*

company; as we experience every Tuesday night at our club, the Magpye and Horse-shoe, Fetter-lane.

Very methodical indeed, Mr. Capias!—John!

Enter SERVANT.

Bid the person who brought this letter walk in. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Have you any curiosity, brother?

R. Weal. Not a jot. I must to the Change. In the evening you may find me in the counting-house, or at Jonathan's. [*Exit* R. WEALTHY.

Sir Will. You shall hear from me.

Enter SHIFT *and* SERVANT.

Shut the door, John, and remember I am not at home. [*Exit* SERVANT.] You came from Mr. Capias?

Shift. I did, sir.

Sir Will. Your name, I think, is Shift?

Shift. It is, sir.

Sir Will. Did Mr. Capias drop any hint of my business with you?

Shift. None. He only said, with his spectacles on his nose, and his hand upon his chin, Sir William Wealthy is a respectable personage, and my client; he wants to retain you in a certain affair, and will open the case, and give you your brief himself: if you adhere to his instructions, and carry your cause, he is generous, and will discharge your bill without taxation.

Sir Will. Ha! ha! my friend Capias to a hair! Well, sir, this is no bad specimen of your abilities. But see that the door is fast. Now, sir, you are to ————

Shift. A moment's pause, if you please. You

must know, Sir William, I am a *prodigious* admirer of forms. Now, Mr. Capias tells me, that it is always the rule to administer a retaining fee before you enter upon the merits.

Sir Will. Oh, sir, I beg your pardon!

Shift. Not that I questioned your generosity; but forms you know ———

Sir Will. No apology, I beg. But as we are to have a closer connexion, it may not be amiss, by way of introduction, to understand one another a little. Pray, sir, where was you born?

Shift. At my father's.

Sir Will. Hum!———And what was he?

Shift. A gentleman.

Sir Will. What was you bred?

Shift. A gentleman.

Sir Will. How do you live?

Shift. Like a gentleman.

Sir Will. Could nothing induce you to unbosom yourself?

Shift. Look ye, Sir William, there is a kind of something in your countenance, a certain openness and generosity, a *je ne scai quoi* in your manner, that I will unlock: you shall see me all.

Sir Will. You will oblige me.

Shift. You must know then, that fortune, which frequently delights to raise the noblest structures from the simplest foundations; who from a tailor made a pope, from a gin-shop an empress, and many a prime minister from nothing at all, has thought fit to raise me to my present height, from the humble employment of "light, your Honour? ——" A link boy.

Sir Will. A pleasant fellow.———Who were your parents?

Shift. I was produced, sir, by a left-handed

marriage, in the language of the news-papers, between an illustrious lamp-lighter and an eminent itinerant cat and dog butcher.—" Cat's meat, and dog's meat."—I dare say, you have heard my mother, sir. But, as to this happy pair I owe little besides my being, I shall drop them where they dropped me——in the street.

Sir Will. Proceed.

Shift. My first knowledge of the world I owe to a school, which has produced many a great man; the avenues of the play-house. There, sir, leaning on my extinguished link, I learned dexterity from pick-pockets, connivance from constables, politics and fashions from footmen, and the art of making and breaking a promise, from their masters: " here, sirrah, light me a-cross the kennel." ——I hope your honour will remember poor Jack. ——" You ragged rascal, I have no half-pence; I'll pay you the next time I see you"——But, lack-a-day, sir, that time I saw as seldom as his tradesmen.

Sir Will. Very well.

Shift. To these accomplishments from without the theatre, I must add one that I obtained within.

Sir Will. How did you gain admittance there?

Shift. My merit, sir, that, like my link, threw a radiance around me.——A detachment from the head-quarters here, took possession, in the summer, of a country corporation, where I did the honours of the barn, by sweeping the stage, and clipping the candles. There my skill and address was so conspicuous, that it procured me the same office the ensuing winter, at Drury-lane, where I acquired intrepidity, the crown of all my virtues.

Sir Will. How did you obtain that?

Shift. By my post. For I think, sir, he that

dares stand the shot of the gallery in lighting, snuffing, and sweeping, the first night of a new play, may bid defiance to the pillory, with all its customary *compliments*.

Sir Will. Some truth in that.

Shift. But an unlucky crab-apple, applied to my right eye, by a patriot gingerbread-baker from the Borough, who would not suffer three dancers from Switzerland, because he hated the French, forced me to a precipitate retreat.

Sir Will. Poor devil!

Shift. Broglio and Contades have done the same. But, as it happened, like a tennis-ball, I rose higher than [*by*] the rebound.

Sir Will. How so?

Shift. My misfortune, sir, moved the compassion of one of our performers, a whimsical man; he took me into his service. To him I owe, what I believe, will make me useful to you.

Sir Will. Explain.

Shift. Why, sir, my master was remarkably happy in an art, which, however disesteemed at present, is, by Tully, reckoned amongst the perfections of an orator—mimickry.

Sir Will. Why, you are deeply read, Mr. Shift!

Shift. A smattering—But, as I was saying, sir, nothing came amiss to my master. Bipeds or quadrupeds: rationals or animals; from the clamour of the bar to the cackle of the barn-door; from the soporific twang of the *Tabernacle* of Tottenham-court, to the melodious bray of their long-eared brethren in Bunhill-fields; all were objects of his imitation, and my attention. In a word, sir, for two whole years, under this professor, I studied and starved, impoverished my body, and pampered my mind, till, thinking myself pretty

nearly equal to my master, I made him one of his own bows, and set up for myself.

Sir Will. You have been successful, I hope.

Shift. Pretty well; I can't complain. My art, sir, is a *pass-par-tout.* I seldom want employment. Let's see how stands my engagements. [*Pulls out a pocket-book.*] Hum,—hum, oh! Wednesday, at Mrs. Gammut's, near Hanover-square; there, there, I shall make a meal upon the *Mingotti;* for her ladyship is in the opera interest; but, however, I shall revenge her cause upon her rival *Mattei.* Sunday evening, at Lady Sustinuto's concert. Thursday, I dine upon the actors, with ten Templars, at the Mitre, in Fleet-street. Friday, I am to give the amorous parly of two intriguing cats in the gutter,* with the disturbing of a hen-roast, at Mr. Deputy Sugarsops, near the Monument. So, sir, you see my hands are full. In short, Sir William, there is not a buck or a turtle devoured within the bills of mortality, but there I may, if I please, stick a napkin under my chin.

Sir Will. I'm afraid, Mr. Shift, I must break in a little upon your engagements; but you shall be no loser by the bargain.

Shift. Command me.

Sir Will. You can be secret as well as serviceable?

Shift. Mute as a mackarel.

Sir Will. Come hither, then. If you betray me to my son ——

Shift. Scalp me.

---

* Alluding to his own *cat-duet*, at the finish of "the Knights"—See page 6, vol. i.

Sir Will. Enough.—You must know then, the hopes of our family are, Mr. Shift, centered in one boy.

Shift. And, I warrant, he is a hopeful one.

Sir Will. No interruption, I beg. George has been abroad these four years, and, from his late behaviour, I have reason to believe, that, had a certain event happened, which I am afraid he wished,—my death ——

Shift. Yes; that's natural enough.

Sir Will. Nay, pray,—there would soon be an end to an ancient and honourable family.

Shift. Very melancholy, indeed. But families, like besoms, will wear to the stumps, and finally fret out, as you say.

Sir Will. Pr'ythee peace for five minutes.

Shift. I am tongue-tied.

Sir Will. Now, I have projected a scheme to prevent this calamity.

Shift. Aye, I should be glad to hear that.

Sir Will. I am going to tell it you.

Shift. Proceed.

Sir Will. George, as I have contrived it, shall experience all the misery of real ruin, without running the least risk.

Shift. Aye, that will be a *coup de maître.*

Sir Will. I have prevailed upon his uncle, a wealthy citizen ——

Shift. I don't like a city plot.

Sir Will. I tell thee it is my own.

Shift. I beg pardon.

Sir Will. My brother, I say, some time since wrote him a circumstantial account of my death; upon which, he is returned, in full expectation of succeeding to my estate.

Shift. Immediately?

Sir Will. No; when at age. In about three months.

Shift. I understand you.

Sir Will. Now, sir, guessing into what hands my heedless boy would naturally fall, on his return, I have, in a feigned character, associated myself with a set of rascals, who will spread every bait that can flatter folly, inflame extravagance, allure inexperience, or catch credulity. And when, by their means, he thinks himself reduced to the last extremity; lost even to the most distant hope ——

Shift. What then?

Sir Will. Then will I step in like his guardian-angel, and snatch him from perdition. If, mortified by misery, he becomes conscious of his errors, I have saved my son: but if, on the other hand, gratitude cannot bind, nor ruin reclaim him, I will cast him out, as an alien to my blood, and trust for the support of my name and family to a remoter branch.

Shift. Bravely resolved. But what part am I to sustain in this drama?

Sir Will. Why, George, you are to know, is already stripped of what money he could command, by two sharpers: but as I never trust them out of my sight they can't deceive me.

Shift. Out of your sight!

Sir Will. Why, I tell thee, I am one of the knot: an adept in their science; can slip, shuffle, cog, or cut, with the best of 'em.

Shift. How do you escape your son's notice?

Sir Will. His firm persuasion of my death, with the extravagance of my disguise.——Why, I would engage to elude your penetration, when I am beaued out for *the baron.* But of that by and

by. He has recourse, after his ill success, to the *cent. per cent.* gentry, the usurers, for a further supply.

Shift. Natural enough.

Sir Will. Pray, do you know,—I forgot his name, a wrinkled old fellow, in a thread-bare coat? He sits every morning, from twelve till two, in the left corner of Lloyd's coffee-house; and every evening, from five till eight, under the clock, at the Temple-exchange.

Shift. What, little Transfer, the broker!

Sir Will. The same. Do you know him?

Shift. Know him! Aye, rot him. It was but last Easter Tuesday, he had me turned out at a feast, at Leather-sellers' Hall, for singing "room for Cuckolds," like a parrot; and vowed it meant a reflection upon the whole body corporate.

Sir Will. You have reason to remember him.

Shift. Yes, yes, I recommended *a minor* to him myself, for the loan only of fifty pounds; and would you believe it, as I hope to be saved, we dined, supped, and wetted five-and-thirty guineas upon tick, in meetings at the Cross-keys, in order to settle the terms; and after all, the scoundrel would not lend us a stiver.

Sir Will. Could you personate him?

Shift. Him! Oh, you shall see me shift into his *shamble* in a minute: and with a withered face, a bit of a purple nose, a cautionary stammer, and a sleek silver head, I would undertake to deceive even his banker. But, to speak the truth, I have a friend that can do this inimitably well. Have not you something of more consequence for me?

Sir Will. I have. Could not you, master Shift, assume another shape? You have attended auctions.

Shift. Auctions! a constant puff. Deep in the

mystery; a professed connoisseur, from a *Niger* to a *nautilus*, from the *Apollo Belvidere* to a butterfly.

Sir Will. One of those insinuating, oily orators, I will get you to personate: for we must have the plate and jewels in our possession, or they will soon fall into other hands.

Shift. I will do it.

Sir Will. Within: I will give you further instructions.

Shift. I'll follow you.

Sir Will. [*Going, returns.*] You will want materials.

Shift. Oh, my dress I can be furnished with in five minutes. [*Exit* SIR WILLIAM.] A whimsical old blade this. I shall laugh if this scheme miscarries. I have a strange mind to lend it a lift—never had a greater—Pho! a damned unnatural connexion this of mine! What have I to do with fathers and guardians! a parcel of preaching, prudent, careful, curmudgeonly—dead to pleasures themselves, and the blasters of it in others—Mere dogs in a manger—No, no, I'll veer, tack about, open my budget to the boy, and join in a counter-plot. But hold, hold, friend *Stephen*, see first how the land lies. Who knows whether this Germanized genius has parts to comprehend, or spirit to reward thy merit. There's danger in that; aye, marry is there. Egad, before I shift the helm, I'll first examine the coast; and then, if there be but a bold shore, and a good bottom, have a care, old Square Toes, you will meet with your match. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR GEORGE, LOADER, *and* SERVANT.

Sir Geo. Let the Martin pannels for the *vis-à-vis*

be carried to Long-Acre, and the pye-balls sent to Hall's to be bitted——You will give me leave to be in your debt till the evening, *Mr. Loader.* I have just enough left to discharge *the baron;* and we must, you know, be punctual with him, for the credit of the country.

Load. Fire him, a snub-nosed son of a bitch! *Levant* me,* but he got enough last night to purchase a principality amongst his countrymen, the High-dutchians and Hussarians.

Sir Geo. You had your share, Mr. Loader.

Load. Who, I! Lurch me at four, but I was marked to the top of your trick, by the baron, my dear. What, I am no *cinque and quatre man.* Come, shall we have a dip in the "history of the Four Kings" this morning?

Sir Geo. Rather too early. Besides it is the rule abroad, never to engage a-fresh, until our old scores are discharged.

Load. Capot me, but those lads abroad are pretty fellows, let 'em say what they will. Here, sir, they will *vowel* you† from father to son to the twentieth generation. They would as soon now-a-days pay a tradesman's bill, as a *play debt.* All sense of honour is gone, not a stiver stirring. They could as soon raise the dead as two pounds two. *Nick* me, but I have a great mind to *tie up*,‡ and ruin the rascals—What, has Transfer been here this morning?

---

* *Levant*, a species of *bankruptcy* among betting men, legs, and gamblers.

† To vowel—to pay by an "I O U,"—*so much.*

‡ *To tie up*—To vow, to engage, or be sworn to desist from a thing. Those, and other slang terms in the text are fully explained in "*Bee's* Dictionary of the Turf, the Ring, &c. &c.

Enter DICK.

Sir Geo. Any body here this morning, Dick?

Dick. Nobody, your honour.

Load. Repique the rascal. He promised to be here before me.

Dick. I beg your honour's pardon. *Mrs. Cole* from the Piazza was here, between seven and eight.

Sir Geo. An early hour for a lady of her calling.

Dick. Mercy on me! The poor gentlewoman is mortally altered since we used to lodge there, in our jaunts from Oxford; wrapt up in flannels: all over the rheumatise.

Load. Ay, ay, old Moll is at her last stake.

Dick. She bade me say, she just stopt in her way to the tabernacle; after the exhortation, she says, she'll call again.

Sir Geo. Exhortation! Oh, I recollect. Well, whilst they only make proselytes from that profession, they are heartily welcome to them. She does not mean to make me a convert?

Dick. I believe she has some such design upon me; for she offered me a book of hymns, a shilling, and a dram, to go along with her.

Sir Geo. No bad scheme, Dick. Thou hast a fine, sober, psalm-singing countenance; and, when thou hast been some time in their trammels, may'st make as able a teacher as the best of 'em.

Dick. Laud, sir, I want learning.

Sir Geo. Oh, *the spirit*, the spirit will supply all that, Dick, never fear.

Enter SIR WILLIAM, *as a German baron.*

Sir Geo. My dear baron, what news from the Haymarket? What says the Florenza? Does

she yield? Shall I be happy? Say yes, and command my fortune.

Sir Will. I was never did see so fine a woman since I was leave Hamburgh; dere was all de colour, all red and white, dat was quite natural; point d'artifice. Then she was dance and sing—I vow to heaven, I was never see de like!

Sir Geo. But how did she receive my embassy? What hopes?

Sir Will. Why dere was *monsieur le chevalier*, when I first enter, dree or four damned queer people? ah, ah, dought I, by gar I guess your business. Dere was one fat pig woman's, dat I know long time: *le valet de chambre* was tell me dat she came from a grand merchaud; ha, ha, dought I, by your leave, stick to your shop; or, if you must have de pretty girl, dere is de play-hous, dat do very well for you; but for de opera, *pardonnez*, by gar, dat is meat for your master.

Sir Geo. Insolent mechanic!—but she despised him?

Sir Will. Ah, may foy, he is damn rich, has beaucoup de guineas; but after de fat woman was go, I was tell the signora, madam, der is one certain *chevalier* of dis country, who has travelled, see de world, *bien fait*, well made, *beaucoup d'esprit*, a great deal of monies, who beg, by gar, to have de honour to drow himself at your feet.

Sir Geo. Well, well, baron.

Sir Will. She aska your name; as soon as I tell her, aha, by gar, dans an instant, she melt like de lomp of sugar: she run to her bureau, and, in de minute, return wid de paper.

Sir Geo. Give it me. [*Reads.*

"*Les preliminaires d'une traite entre le Chevalier Wealthy, and la Signora Diamenti*" ———

A bagatelle, a trifle: she shall have it.

Load. Hark-ye, knight, what is all that there outlandish stuff?

Sir Geo. Read, read! The eloquence of angels, my dear baron!

Load. Slam me, but the man's mad! I don't understand their gibberish——What is it in English?

Sir Geo. The preliminaries of a subsidy treaty between Sir G. Wealthy and Signora Florenza? that the said signora will resign the possession of her person to the said Sir George, on the payment of three hundred guineas monthly, for equipage, table, domestics, dress, dogs, and diamonds; her debts to be duly discharged, and a note advanced of five hundred by way of entrance.

Load. Zounds, what a cormorant! She must be devilish handsome.

Sir Geo. I am told so.

Load. Told so! Why, did you never see her?

Sir Geo. No; and possibly never may, but from my box at the opera.

Load. Hey-day! Why, what the devil ——

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, you stare, I don't wonder at it. This is an elegant refinement, unknown to the gross voluptuaries of this part of the world. This is, Mr. Loader, what may be called a debt to your dignity: for an opera girl is as essential a piece of equipage for a man of fashion as his coach.

Load. The devil!

Sir Geo. 'Tis for the vulgar only to enjoy what they possess: the distinction of ranks and conditions are, to have hounds, and never hunt; cooks, and dine at taverns; houses you never inhabit; mistresses you never enjoy ——

Load. And debts you never pay. Egad, I am

not surprised at it; if this be your trade, no wonder that you want money for necessaries, when you give such a damned deal for nothing at all.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mrs. Cole, to wait upon your honour.

Sir Geo. My dear baron, run, despatch my affair, conclude my treaty, and thank her for the very reasonable conditions.

Sir Will. I sall.

Sir Geo. Mr. Loader, shall I trouble you to introduce the lady? She is, I think, your acquaintance.

Load. Who, old Moll? Aye, aye, she's your market-woman. I would not give six-pence for your signoras. One armful of good, wholesome British beauty is worth a ship-load of their trapsing, tawdry trollops. But, hark-ye, baron, how much for the table? Why she must have a devilish large family, or a monstrous stomach.

Sir Will. Aye, aye, dere, is her moder, *la complaisante* to walk in de Park, and to go to de play; two broders, *deux valets*, dree Spanish lap-dogs, and de monkey.

Load. Strip me, if I would *set* five shillings against the whole gang. May my partner renounce with the game in his hand, if I were you, knight, if I would not —— [*Exit* BARON.

Sir Geo. But the lady waits. [*Exit* LOAD.] A strange fellow this! What a whimsical jargon he talks! Not an idea abstracted from play! To say truth, I am sincerely sick of my acquaintance: but, however, I have the first people in the kingdom to keep me in countenance. Death and the dice level all distinctions.

Enter MRS. COLE, *supported by* LOADER *and* DICK.

Mrs. Cole. Gently, gently, good Mr. Loader.

Load. Come along, old Moll. Why, you jade, you look as rosy this morning, I must have a smack at your muns. Here, taste her, she is as good as old hock to get you a stomach.

Mrs. Cole. Fye, Mr. Loader, I thought you had forgot me.

Load. I forget you! I would as soon forget what is trumps.

Mrs. Cole. Softly, softly, young man. There, there, mighty well. And how does your honour do? I ha'n't seen your honour, I can't tell the—Oh! mercy on me, there's a twinge ———

Sir Geo. What is the matter, Mrs. Cole?

Mrs. Cole. My old disorder, the rheumatise; I ha'n't been able to get a wink of ———Oh, la! what, you have been in town these two days?

Sir Geo. Since Wednesday.

Mrs. Cole. And never once called upon old Cole. No, no, I am worn out, thrown by and forgotten, like a tattered garment, as Mr. Squintum says. Oh, he is a dear man! But for him I had been a lost sheep; never known the comforts of the *new birth;* no,——There's your old friend, *Kitty Carrot,* at home still. What, shall we see you this evening? I have kept the green-room for you ever since I heard you were in town.

Load. What, shall we take a snap at old Moll's? Hey, beldame, have you a good batch of Burgundy abroach?

Mrs. Cole. Bright as a ruby; and for flavour! You know the colonel——He and Jenny Cummins drank three flasks, hand to fist, last night.

Load. What, and bilk thee of thy share?

Mrs. Cole. Ah, don't mention it, Mr. Loader. No, that's all over with me. The time has been when I could have earned thirty shillings a day by my own drinking, and the next morning was neither sick nor sorry; but now, O laud! a thimbleful turns me topsy-turvy.

Load. Poor old girl!

Mrs. Cole. Aye, I have done with these idle vanities; my thoughts are fixed upon a better place. What, I suppose, Mr. Loader, you will be for your old friend the black-eyed girl, from Rosemary-lane. Ha, ha! Well, 'tis a merry little tit. A thousand pities she's such a reprobate!——But she'll mend; her time is not come: all shall have their call, as Mr. Squintum says, sooner or later; regeneration is not the work of a day. No, no, no,—Oh!

Sir Geo. Not worse, I hope.

Mrs. Cole. Rack, rack, gnaw, gnaw, never easy; a-bed or up, all's one. Pray, honest friend, have you any *clary* or *mint-water* in the house?

Dick. A case of French drams.

Mrs. Cole. Heaven defend me! I would not touch a dram for the world.

Sir Geo. They are but cordials, Mrs. Cole. Fetch'em, you blockhead. [*Exit* DICK.

Mrs. Cole. Aye, I am a-going; a wasting and a wasting, Sir George. What will become of the house when I am gone, heaven knows.——No.——When people are missed, then they are mourned. Sixteen years have I lived in the Garden, comfortably and creditably; and, though I say it, could have got bail any hour of the day: reputable tradesmen, Sir George, neighbours, Mr. Loader knows; no knock-me-down doings in my

house. A set of regular, sedate, sober customers. No rioters. Sixteen did I say——Ay, eighteen years I have paid scot and lot in the parish of St. Paul's, and, during the whole time, nobody have said, Mrs. Cole, why do you so? Unless twice that I was before Sir Thomas De Val, and three times in the round-house. [*She cries.*

Sir Geo. Nay, don't weep, Mrs. Cole.

Load. May I lose deal, with *an honour* at bottom, if old Moll does not bring tears into my eyes.

Mrs. Cole. However, it is a comfort after all, to think one has past through the world with credit and character. Aye, a good name, as Mr. Squintum says, is better than a gallipot of ointment.

Enter DICK, *with a Dram.*

Load. Come, haste, Dick, haste; sorrow is dry. Here, Moll, shall I fill thee a bumper?

Mrs. Cole. Hold, hold, Mr. Loader! Heaven help you, I could as soon swallow the Thames. Only a sip, to keep the gout out of my stomach.

Load. Why then, here's to thee.—*Levant* me, but it is *supernaculum.*—Speak when you have enough.

Mrs. Cole. I wo'n't trouble you for the glass; my hands do so tremble and shake, I shall but spill the good creature.

Load. Well pulled. But now to business. Pr'ythee, Moll, did not I see a tight young wench, in a linen gown, knock at your door this morning?

Mrs. Cole. Aye, a young thing from the country.

Load. Could we not get a peep at her this evening?

Mrs. Cole. Impossible! She is engaged to Sir Timothy Totter. I have taken earnest for her three months.

Load. Pho, what signifies such a fellow as that! Tip him an old trader, and give her to the knight.

Mrs. Cole. 'Tip him an old trader!'—Mercy on us, where do you expect to go when you die, Mr. Loader?

Load. Crop me, but this Squintum has turned her brains.

Sir Geo. Nay, Mr. Loader, I think the gentleman has wrought a most happy reformation.

Mrs. Cole. Oh, it was a wonderful work. There had I been tossing in the sea of sin, [like a ship,] without rudder or compass. And had not the good gentleman piloted me into the harbour of grace, I must have struck against the rocks of reprobation, and have been quite swallowed up in the whirlpool of despair. He was the precious instrument of my spiritual sprinkling.—But, however, Sir George, if your mind be set upon a young country thing, to-morrow night I believe I can furnish you.

Load. As how?

Mrs. Cole. I have advertised this morning, in the register-office, for servants under seventeen; and ten to one but I light on something that will do.

Load. Pillory me, but it has a face.

Mrs. Cole. Truly, consistently with my conscience, I would do any thing for your honour.

Sir Geo. Right, Mrs. Cole, never lose sight of that monitor. But, pray, how long has this heavenly change been wrought in you?

Mrs. Cole. Ever since my last visitation of the gout. Upon my first fit, seven years ago, I be-

gan to have my doubts and my *waverings;* but I was lost in a labyrinth, and nobody to show me the road. One time, I thought of dying *a Roman*, which is truly a comfortable communion enough for one of us:—but it would not do.

Sir Geo. Why not?

Mrs. Cole. I went one summer over to Boulogne to repent; and, would you believe it, the bare-footed, bald-pate beggars would not give me absolution, without I quitted my business.——Did you ever hear of such a set of scabby——Besides, I could not bear their barbarity. Would you believe it, Mr. Loader, they lock up, for their lives, in a nunnery, the prettiest, sweetest, tender, young things!———Oh, six of them, for a season, would finish my business here, and then I should have nothing to do, but to think of hereafter.

Load. Brand me, what a country!

Sir Geo. Oh, scandalous!

Mrs. Cole. O no, it would not do. So, in my last illness, I was *wished* to Mr. Squintum, who stept in with his *saving grace*, got me with the *new birth*, and I became as you see, regenerate, and another creature.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Mr. Transfer, sir, has sent to know if your honour be at home.

Sir Geo. Mrs. Cole, I am mortified to part with you. But business, you know ———

Mrs. Cole. True, Sir George. Mr. Loader, your arm———Gently, oh, oh!.

Sir Geo. Would you take another thimbleful, Mrs. Cole?

Mrs. Cole. Not a drop——I shall see you this evening?

Sir Geo. Depend upon me.

Mrs. Cole. To-morrow I hope to suit you—— We are to have, at the tabernacle, an occasional hymn, with a thanksgiving sermon for my recovery. After which, I shall call at the register-office, and see what goods my advertisement has brought in.

Sir Geo. Extremely obliged to you, Mrs. Cole.

Mrs. Cole. Or, if that should not do, I have a tid bit at home will suit your stomach; never brushed by a beard. Well, heaven bless you—— Softly, have a care, Mr. Loader——Richard, you may as well give me the bottle into the chair, for fear I should be taken ill on the road. Gently, ———so, so! [*Ex.* MRS. COLE *and* LOADER.

Sir Geo. Dick, show Mr. Transfer in——Ha, ha, what a hodge-podge! How the jade has jumbled together the carnal and the spiritual; with what ease she reconciles her new birth to her old calling!——No wonder, these preachers have plenty of proselytes, whilst they have the address so comfortably to blend the hitherto jarring interests of the two worlds.

Enter LOADER.

Load. Well, knight, I have housed her; but they want you within, sir.

Sir Geo. I'll go to them immediately. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

Enter DICK, *introducing* TRANSFER.

Dick. My master will come to you presently. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Mr. Transfer, your servant.

Trans. Your honour's very humble. I thought to have found Mr. Loader here.

Sir Geo. He will return immediately. Well, Mr. Transfer——but take a chair——you have had a long walk. Mr. Loader, I presume, opened to you the urgency of my business.

Trans. Ay, ay, the general cry, "*money, money!*" I don't know, for my part, where all the money is flown to. Formerly a note, with a tolerable endorsement, was as current as cash. If your uncle Richard now would join in this security———

Sir Geo. Impossible.

Trans. Ay, like enough; I wish you were of age.

Sir Geo. So do I. But as that will be considered in the premium ———

Trans. True, true,———I see you understand business———And what sum does your honour lack at present?

Sir Geo. Lack!———How much have you brought?

Trans. Who, I? Dear me! none.

Sir Geo. Zounds, none!

Trans. Lack-a-day, none to be had, I think. All the morning have I been upon the hunt. There, Ephraim Barebones, the tallow-chandler, in Thames-street, used to be a never-failing chap; not a guinea to be got there. Then I tottled away to Nebuchadnezzar Zebulon, in the Old Jewry, but it happened to be Saturday; and they never *touch* on the Sabbath, you know.

Sir Geo. Why what the devil can I do?

Trans. Good me, I did not know your honour had been so pressed.

Sir Geo. My honour *prest!* Yes, my honour is not only *prest*, but ruined, unless I can raise money to redeem it. That blockhead Loader! to depend upon this old doating ——

Trans. Well, well, now I declare, I am quite sorry to see your honour in such a taking.

Sir Geo. Damn your sorrow.

Trans. But come, don't be cast down: though money is not to be had, money's worth may, and that's the same thing.

Sir Geo. How, dear Transfer?

Trans. Why I have, at my warehouse, in the city, ten casks of whale-blubber, a large cargo of Dantzic dowlas, with a curious sortment of Birmingham hafts and Whitney blankets, for exportation.

Sir Geo. Hey!

Trans. And, stay, stay, then, again, at my country-house, the bottom of Gray's-inn-lane, there's a hundred tun of fine old hay, only damaged a little last winter, for want of thatching; with forty load of flint-stones.

Sir Geo. Well.

Trans. Your honour may have all these for a reasonable profit, and convert them into cash.

Sir Geo. Blubber and blankets? Why, you old rascal, do you banter me?

Trans. Who I? *O law!* marry, heaven forbid.

Sir Geo. Get out of my————you stuttering scoundrel.

Trans. If your honour would but hear me ——

Sir Geo. Troop, I say, unless you have a mind to go a shorter way than you came. [*Exit* TRANSFER.] And yet there is something so uncommonly

ridiculous in his proposal, that were my mind more at ease. [*Enter* LOADER.] So, sir, you have recommended me to a fine fellow.

Load. What's the matter?

Sir Geo. He can't supply me with a shilling! and wants, besides, to make me a dealer in dowlas.

Load. Aye, and a very good commodity too. People that are upon the *ways and means* must not be nice, knight. A pretty piece of work you have made here! Thrown up the cards, with the game in your hands.

Sir Geo. Why, pr'ythee, of what use would his ———

Load. Use! of every use. Procure you the spankers, my boy. I have a broker that, in a twinkling, shall take off your bargain.

Sir Geo. Indeed?

Load. Indeed! Aye, indeed. You sit down to hazard and not know the chances! I'll call him back.——Holo, Transfer!——A pretty little, busy, bustling——You may travel miles before you will meet with his match. If there is one pound in the city, he will get it. He creeps, like a ferret, into their bags, and makes the yellow boys bolt again.

Enter TRANSFER.

Come hither, little Transfer; what, man, our Minor was a little too hasty; he did not understand *trap:* knows nothing of the game, my dear.

Trans. What I said, was to serve Sir George; as he seemed ———

Load. I told him so; well, well, we will take thy commodities, were they as many more. But try, pr'ythee, if thou couldst not procure us some of the *ready*, for present spending.

Trans. Let me consider.

Load. Aye, do come: shuffle thy brains; never fear the baronet. To let a lord of lands want shiners! 'tis a shame.

Trans. I do recollect, in this quarter of the town, an old friend, that used to do things in this way.

Load. Who?

Trans. Statute, the scrivener.

Load. Slam me, but he has nicked the chance.

Trans. A hard man, master Loader.

Sir Geo. No matter.

Trans. His demands are exorbitant.

Sir Geo. That is no fault of ours.

Load. Well said, knight!

Trans. But to save time, I had better mention his terms.

Load. Unnecessary.

Trans. Five per cent. legal interest.

Sir Geo. He shall have it.

Trans. Ten, the premium.

Sir Geo. No more words.

Trans. Then, as you are not of age, five more for insuring your life.

Load. We will give it.

Trans. As for what he will demand for the risk ———

Sir Geo. He shall be satisfied.

Trans. You pay the attorney.

Sir Geo. Amply, amply; Loader, despatch him.

Load. There, there, little Transfer; now every thing is settled. All terms shall be complied with, reasonable or unreasonable. What, our principal is a man of honour. [*Exit* TRANSFER.] Hey, my knight, this is doing business. This pinch is a sure card.

Re-enter TRANSFER.

Trans. I had forgot one thing. I am not the principal; you pay the brokerage.

Load. Ay, ay, and a handsome present into the bargain, never fear.

Trans. Enough, enough.

Load. Hark-ye, Transfer, we'll take the Birmingham hafts and Whitney wares.

Trans. They shall be forthcoming.———You would not have the hay with the flints?

Load. Every pebble of 'em. The magistrates of the Baronet's borough are infirm and gouty. He shall deal for them as new pavement. [*Exit* TRANSFER.] So, that's settled. I believe, knight, I can lend you a helping hand as to the last article. I know some traders that will truck: fellows with finery. Not commodities of such clumsy conveyance as old Transfer's.

Sir Geo. You are obliging.

Load. I'll do it, boy; and get you, into the bargain, a bonny auctioneer, that shall dispose of 'em all in a crack. [*Exit.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. Your uncle, sir, has been waiting some time.

Sir Geo. He comes in a lucky hour. Show him in. [*Exit* DICK.] Now for a lecture. My situation shall not sink my spirits, however. Here comes the musty trader, running over with remonstrances. I must banter the cit.

Enter RICHARD WEALTHY.

R. Weal. So, sir, what, I suppose, this is a spice of your foreign breeding, to let your uncle

kick his heels in your hall, whilst your presence chamber is crowded with pimps, bawds, and gamesters.

Sir Geo. Oh, a proof of my respect, dear nuncle. Would it have been decent, now, nuncle, to have introduced you into such company?

R. Weal. Wonderfully considerate! Well, young man, and what do you think will be the end of all this? Here I have received by the last mail, a quire of your draughts from abroad. I see you are determined our *neighbours* should taste of your magnificence.

Sir Geo. Yes, I think I did some credit to my country.

R. Weal. And how are all these to be paid?

Sir Geo. That I submit to you, dear nuncle.

R. Weal. From me!——Not a *sous* to keep you from *the counter*.

Sir Geo. Why then let the scoundrels stay. It is their duty. I have other demands, debts of honour, which must be discharged.

R. Weal. Here's a diabolical distinction! Here's a prostitution of words!—Honour! 'Sdeath, that a rascal, who has picked your pocket, shall have his crime gilded with the most sacred distinction, and his plunder punctually paid, whilst the industrious mechanic, who ministers to your very wants, shall have his debt delayed, and his demand treated as insolent.

Sir Geo. Oh! a truce to this thread-bare trumpery, dear nuncle.

R. Weal. I confess my folly; but make yourself easy; you wo'n't be troubled with many more of my visits. I own I was weak enough to design a short expostulation with you; but as we in the

city know the true value of time, I shall take care not to squander away any more of it upon you.

Sir Geo. A prudent resolution.

R. Weal. One commission, however, I cannot dispense with myself from executing.——It was agreed between your father and me, that as he had but one son and I one daughter ——

Sir Geo. Your gettings should be added to his estate, and my cousin Margery and I *squat* down together in the comfortable state of matrimony.

R. Weal. Puppy! Such was our intention. Now his last will claims this contract.

Sir Geo. Despatch, dear nuncle.

R. Weal. Why, then, in a word, see me here demand the execution.

Sir Geo. What d'ye mean? For me to marry Margery?

R. Weal. I do.

Sir Geo. What, moi—me?

R. Weal. You, you ——Your answer, ay or no?

Sir Geo. Why, then, concisely and briefly, without evasion, equivocation, or further circumlocution,——No.

R. Weal. I am glad of it.

Sir Geo. So am I.

R. Weal. But pray, if it would not be too great a favour, what objections can you have to my daughter? Not that I want to remove them, but merely out of curiosity. What objections?

Sir Geo. None. I neither know her, have seen her, inquired after her, or ever intend it.

R. Weal. What, perhaps I am the stumbling block?

Sir Geo. You have hit it.

R. Weal. Aye, now we come to the point. Well, and pray ——

Sir Geo. Why, it is not so much a dislike to your person, though that is exceptionable enough, but your profession, dear nuncle, is an insuperable obstacle.

R. Weal. Good lack! And what harm has that done, pray?

Sir Geo. Done! So stained, polluted, and tainted the whole mass of your blood, thrown such a blot on your 'scutcheon, as ten regular successions can hardly efface.

R. Weal. The deuce!

Sir Geo. And could you now, consistently with your duty as a faithful guardian, recommend my union with the daughter of a trader?

R. Weal. Why, indeed, I ask pardon; I am afraid I did not weigh the matter so maturely as I ought.

Sir Geo. Oh, a horrid barbarous scheme!

R. Weal. But then, I thought her having the honour to partake of the same flesh and blood with yourself, might prove, in some measure, a kind of *fullers' earth*, to scour out the dirty spots contracted by commerce.

Sir Geo. Impossible!

R. Weal. Besides, here it has been the practice even of peers.

Sir Geo. Don't mention the unnatural intercourse! Thank heaven, Mr. Richard Wealthy, my education has been in another country, where I have been too well instructed in the value of nobility, to think of intermixing it with the offspring of a Bourgeois. Why, what apology could I make to my children, for giving them such a mother?

R. Weal. I did not think of that. Then I must despair, I am afraid.

Sir Geo. I can afford but little hopes. Though, upon recollection ——— Is *the grisette* pretty?

R. Weal. A parent may be partial. She is thought so.

Sir Geo. Ah, *la jolie petite Bourgeoise!* Poor girl, I sincerely pity her. And, I suppose, to procure her emersion from the mercantile mud, no consideration would be spared.

R. Weal. Why, to be sure, for such an honour, one would strain a point.

Sir Geo. Why then, not totally to destroy your hopes, I do recollect an edict in favour of Brittany; that when a man of distinction engages in commerce, his nobility is suffered to sleep.

R. Weal. Indeed!

Sir Geo. And upon his quitting the contagious connexion, he is permitted to resume his rank.

R. Weal. That's fortunate.

Sir Geo. So, nuncle Richard, if you will sell out of the stocks, shut up your counting-house, and quit St. Mary-Axe for Grosvenor-square ——

R. Weal. What then?

Sir Geo. Why, when your rank has had time to rouse itself, (for I think your nobility, nuncle, has had a pretty long nap,) if the girl's person is pleasing, and the purchase-money is adequate to the honour, I may in time be prevailed upon to restore her to the right of her family.

R. Weal. Amazing condescension!

Sir Geo. Good-nature is my foible. But, upon my soul, I would not have gone so far for any body else.

R. Weal. I can contain no longer. Hear me, spendthrift, prodigal, do you know, that in ten days

your whole revenue wo'n't purchase you a feather to adorn your empty head ——

Sir Geo. Hey-dey, what's the matter now?

R. Weal. And that you derive every acre of your boasted patrimony from your great uncle, a soap-boiler!

Sir Geo. Infamous aspersion!

R. Weal. It was his bags, the fruits of his honest industry, that preserved your lazy, beggarly nobility. His wealth repaired your tottering hall, from the ruins of which, even the rats had run.

Sir Geo. Better our name had perished! Insupportable! soap-boiling, uncle!

R. Weal. Traduce a trader in a country of commerce! It is treason against the community; and, for your punishment, I would have you restored to the sordid condition from whence we drew you, and, like your predecessors, the Picts, stript, painted, and fed upon hips, haws, and blackberries.

Sir Geo. A truce, dear haberdasher.

R. Weal. One pleasure I have, that to this goal you are upon the gallop; but have a care, the sword hangs but by a thread. When next we meet, know me for the master of your fate. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. Insolent mechanic! But that his Bourgeois blood would have soiled my sword ——

Enter BARON *and* LOADER.

Sir Will. What is de matter?

Sir Geo. A fellow here, upon the credit of a little affinity, has dared to upbraid me with being sprung from a soap-boiler.

Sir Will. Vat, you from the boiler of soap!

Sir Geo. Me.

Sir Will. Aha, begar, dat is anoder ting—And

harka you, mister monsieur, ha—how dare a you have d'affrontary—

Sir Geo. How!

Sir Will. De impertinence to sit down, play wid me?

Sir Geo. What is this?

Sir Will. A beggarly Bourgeois *vis-à-vis*, a baron of twenty descents.

Load. But baron ——

Sir Will. By gar, I am almost ashamed to win of such a low, dirty——Give me my monies, and let me never see your face.

Load. Why, but, baron, you mistake this thing; I know the old buck this fellow prates about.

Sir Will. May be.

Load. Pigeon me, as true a gentleman as the Grand Signior. He was, indeed, a good-natured, obliging, friendly fellow; and being a great judge of soap, tar, and train-oil, he used to have it home to his house, and sell it to his acquaintance for ready money, to serve them.

Sir Will. Was dat all?

Load. Upon my honour.

Sir Will. Oh, dat, dat is anoder ting. By gar I was afraid he was negotiant.

Load. Nothing like it.

Enter DICK.

Dick. A gentleman to inquire for Mr. Loader.

Load. I come—— A pretty son of a bitch, this baron! pimps for a man, picks his pocket, and then wants to kick him out of company, because his uncle was an oilman. [*Exit.*

Sir Will. I beg pardon, *chevalier*, I was mistake.

Sir Geo. Oh, don't mention it; had the *flam* been fact, your behaviour was natural enough.

Enter LOADER.

Load. Mr. Smirk, the auctioneer.

Sir Geo. Show him in, by all means.

[*Exit* LOADER.

Sir Will. You have an affair.

Sir Geo. If you'll walk into the next room, they will be finished in five minutes. [*Exit* SIR WILLIAM.

Enter LOADER, *with* SHIFT *as* SMIRK.

Load. Here, master Smirk, this is the gentleman. Hark-ye, knight, did not I tell you, old Moll was your mark? Here, she has brought a pretty piece of man's meat already; as sweet as a nosegay, and as ripe as a cherry, you rogue. Despatch him, meantime we'll manage the girl. [*Exit.*

Smirk. You are the principal.

Sir Geo. Even so. I have, Mr. Smirk, some things of considerable value, which I want to dispose of immediately.

Smirk. You have?

Sir Geo. Could you assist me?

Smirk. Doubtless.

Sir Geo. But, directly?

Smirk. We have an auction at twelve. I'll add your cargo to the catalogue.

Sir Geo. Can that be done?

Smirk. Every day's practice: it is for the credit of the sale. Last week, amongst the valuable effects of a gentleman, going abroad, I sold a choice collection of china, with a curious service of plate; though the real party was never master of above two delft dishes, and a dozen of pewter, in all his life.

Sir Geo. Very artificial. But this must be concealed.

Smirk. Buried *here.* Oh, many an aigrette and solitaire have I sold, to discharge a lady's play-debt. But then we must know the parties; otherwise it might be knocked down to the husband himself. Ha, ha——Heigh-hö!

Sir Geo. True. Upon my word, your profession requires parts.

Smirk. Nobody's more. Did you ever hear, Sir George, what first brought me into the business?

Sir Geo. Never.

Smirk. Quite an accident, as I may say. You must have known my predecessor, Mr. Prig, the greatest man in the world, in his way, aye, that ever was or ever will be; quite a jewel of a man; he would touch you up a lot; there was no resisting him. He would force you to bid, whether you would or no. I shall never see his equal.

Sir Geo. You are modest, Mr. Smirk.

Smirk. No, no, but his *shadow.* Far be it from me, to vie with so great a man. But, as I was saying, my predecessor, Mr. Prig, was to have a sale, as it might be, on a Saturday. On Friday at noon, (I shall never forget the day,) he was suddenly seized with a violent cholic. He sent for me to his bed-side, squeezed me by the hand; dear Smirk, said he, what an accident! You know what is [coming on] to-morrow; the greatest show this season; prints, pictures, bronzes, butterflies, medals, and mignonettes; all the world will be there; lady Dy Joss, Mrs. Nankyn, the duchess of Dupe, and every body at all: You see my state, it will be impossible for me to mount. What can I do?——It was not for me, you know, to advise that great man.

Sir Geo. No, no.

Smirk. At last, looking wistfully at me, Smirk, says he, do you love me?——Mr. Prig, can you doubt it?———I'll put it to the test, says he; supply my place to-morrow.——I, eager to show my love, rashly and rapidly replied, "I will."

Sir Geo. That was bold.

Smirk. Absolute madness. But I had gone too far to recede. Then the point was, to prepare for the awful occasion. The first want that occurred to me, was a wig; but this was too material an article to depend on my own judgement. I resolved to consult my friends.——I told them the affair——"You hear, gentlemen, what has happened; Mr. Prig, one of the greatest men in his way the world ever saw, or ever will, quite a jewel of a man, taken with a violent fit of the cholic; to-morrow, the greatest show this season; prints, pictures, bronzes, butterflies, medals, and mignonettes; every body in the world to be there; Lady Dy Joss, Mrs. Nankyn, duchess of Dupe, and all mankind; it being impossible he should mount, I have consented to sell———" They stared———"It is true, gentlemen. Now I should be glad to have your opinions as to a wig."——They were divided: some recommended a tye, others a bag: one mentioned a bob, but was soon over-ruled. Now, for my part, I own, I rather inclined to the bag; but to avoid the imputation of rashness, I resolved to take Mrs. Smirk's judgement, my wife, a dear good woman, fine in figure, high in taste, a superior genius, and knows old china like a Nabob.

Sir Geo. What was her decision?

Smirk. I told her the case——My dear, you know what has happened. My good friend, Mr.

Prig, the greatest man in the world, in his way, that ever was, or ever will be, quite a jewel of a man, a violent fit of the cholic——the greatest show this season, to-morrow, pictures, and every thing in the world; all the world will be there: now, as it is impossible he should, I mount in his stead. You know the importance of a wig; I have asked my friends——some recommended a tye, others a bag———what is your opinion? "Why, to deal freely, Mr. Smirk, says she, a tye for your round, regular, smiling face would be rather too formal, and a bag too boyish, deficient in dignity for the solemn occasion; were I worthy to advise, you should wear a something between both."——"I'll be hanged if you don't mean a major." I jumped at the hint, and a major it was.

Sir Geo. So, that was fixed.

Smirk. Finally. But next day, when I came to mount the rostrum, then was the trial. My limbs shook, and my tongue trembled. The first lot was a chamber-utensil, in Chelsea china, of the pea-green pattern. It occasioned a great laugh; but I got through it. Her grace, indeed, gave me great encouragement. I overheard her whisper to Lady Dy, upon my word, Mr. Smirk does it very well. Very well, indeed, Mr. Smirk, addressing herself to me. I made an acknowledging bow to her grace, as in duty bound. But, one flower flounced involuntarily from me that day, as I may say. I remember, Dr. Trifle called it *enthusiastic*, and pronounced it a presage of my future greatness.

Sir Geo. What was that?

Smirk. Why, sir, the lot was a *Guido;* a single figure, a marvellous fine performance; well preserved, and highly finished. It stuck at *five-and-*

forty; I, charmed with the picture, and piqued at the people, "a going for five-and-forty, nobody more than five-and-forty,—Pray, ladies and gentlemen, look at this piece, quite flesh and blood, and only wants a touch from the torch of Prometheus, to start from the canvas and fall a bidding." A general plaudit ensued, I bowed, and in three minutes knocked it down at *sixty-three, ten.*

Sir Geo. That was a stroke at least equal to your master.

Smirk. O dear me! You did not know the great man—alike in every thing. He had as much to say upon a ribbon as a *Raphael.* His manner was inimitably fine. I remember, they took him off at the play-house, some time ago; pleasant, but wrong. Public characters should not be sported with—They are sacred—But we lose time.

Sir Geo. Oh, in the lobby, on the table, you will find the particulars.

Smirk. We shall see you. There will be a world of company. I shall please you. But the great nicety of our art is, *the eye.* Mark how mine skims round the room. Some bidders are shy, and only advance with a nod; but I nail them. One, two, three, four, five. You will be surprised—Ha, ha, ha,—*heigh-ho!* [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

Enter SIR GEORGE *and* LOADER.

Sir Geo. A most infernal run. Let's see, [*Pulls out a card.*] Loader a thousand, the baron two,

Tally——Enough to beggar a banker. Every shilling of Transfer's supply exhausted! nor will even the sale of my moveables prove sufficient to discharge my debts. Death and the devil! In what a complication of calamities has a few days plunged me! And no resource?

Load. Knight, here's old Moll, come to wait on you; she has brought the tid-bit I spoke of. Shall I bid her send her in?

Sir Geo. Pray do. [*Exit* LOADER.

Enter MRS. COLE *and* LUCY.

Mrs. Cole. Come along, Lucy. You bashful baggage, I thought I had silenced your scruples. Don't you remember what Mr. Squintum said? A woman's not worth saving, that won't be guilty of a swinging sin; for then they have matter to repent upon. Here, your honour, I leave her to your management. She is young, tender, and timid; does not know what is for her own good: but your honour will soon teach her. I would willingly stay, but I must not lose the *lecture*. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. Upon my credit, a fine figure! Awkward——Can't produce her publicly as mine; but she will do for private amusement——Will you be seated, miss?——Dumb! quite a picture! She too wants a touch of the Promethean torch——Will you be so kind, ma'am, to walk from your frame and take a chair?——Come, pr'ythee, why so coy? Nay, I am not very adroit in the custom of this country. I suppose I must conduct you ——Come, miss.

Lucy. O, sir.

Sir Geo. Child!

Lucy. If you have any humanity, spare me.

Sir Geo. In tears! What can this mean? Arti-

fice. A project to raise the price, I suppose. Look-ye, my dear, you may save this piece of pathetic for another occasion. It won't do with me; I am no novice——So, child, a truce to your tragedy, I beg.

Lucy. Indeed you wrong me, sir; indeed you do.

Sir Geo. Wrong you! how came you here, and for what purpose?

Lucy. A shameful one. I know it all, and yet believe me, sir, I am innocent.

Sir Geo. Oh, I don't question that. Your pious patroness is a proof of your innocence.

Lucy. What can I say to gain your credit? And yet, sir, strong as appearances are against me, by all that's holy, you see me here, a poor distressed, involuntary victim.

Sir Geo. Her style 's above the common class; her tears real.—Rise, child.—How the poor creature trembles!

Lucy. Say, then, I am safe.

Sir Geo. Fear nothing.

Lucy. May heaven reward you; I cannot.

Sir Geo. Pr'ythee, child, collect yourself, and help me to unravel this mystery. You came hither willingly? There was no force?

Lucy. None.

Sir Geo. You know Mrs. Cole.

Lucy. Too well.

Sir Geo. How came you then to trust her?

Lucy. Mine, sir, is a tedious, melancholy tale.

Sir Geo. And artless too?

Lucy. As innocence.

Sir Geo. Give it me.

Lucy. It will tire you.

Sir Geo. Not, if it be true. Be just, and you will find me generous.

Lucy. On that, sir, I relied in venturing hither.

Sir Geo. You did me justice. Trust me with all your story. If you deserve, depend upon my protection.

Lucy. Some months ago, sir, I was considered as the joint heiress of a respectable, wealthy merchant; dear to my friends, happy in my prospects, and my father's favourite.

Sir Geo. His name.

Lucy. There you must pardon me. Unkind and cruel, though he has been to me, let me discharge the duty of a daughter, suffer in silence, nor bring reproach on him who gave me being.

Sir Geo. I applaud your piety.

Lucy. At this happy period, my father, judging an addition of wealth must bring an increase of happiness, resolved to unite me with a man, sordid in his mind, brutal in his manners, and riches his only recommendation. My refusal of this ill-suited match, though mildly given, inflamed my father's temper, naturally choleric, alienated his affections, and banished me his house, distressed and destitute.

Sir Geo. Would no friend receive you?

Lucy. Alas, how few are friends to the unfortunate! Besides, I knew, sir, such a step would be considered by my father as an appeal from his justice. I therefore retired to a remote corner of the town, trusting, as my only advocate, to the tender calls of nature, in his cool, reflecting hours.

Sir Geo. How came you to know this woman?

Lucy. Accident placed me in a house, the mistress of which professed the same principles with

my infamous conductress. There, as enthusiasm is the child of melancholy, I caught the infection. A constant attendance on their assemblies procured me the acquaintance of this woman, whose extraordinary zeal and devotion first drew my attention and confidence. I trusted her with my story, and, in return, received the warmest invitation to take the protection of her house. This I unfortunately accepted.

Sir Geo. Unfortunately indeed!

Lucy. By the decency of appearances, I was some time imposed upon. But an accident, which you will excuse my repeating, revealed all the horror of my situation. I will not trouble you with a recital of all the arts used to seduce me: happily they hitherto have failed. But this morning I was acquainted with my destiny; and no other election left me, but immediate compliance, or a jail. In this desperate condition, you cannot wonder, sir, at my choosing rather to rely on the generosity of a gentleman, than the humanity of a creature insensible to pity, and void of every virtue.

Sir Geo. The event shall justify your choice. You have my faith and honour for your security. For, although I cannot boast of my own goodness, yet I have an honest feeling for afflicted virtue; and, however unfashionable, a spirit that dares afford it protection. Give me your hand. As soon as I have despatched some pressing business here, I will lodge you in an asylum, sacred to the distresses of your sex; where indignant beauty is guarded from temptation, and deluded innocence rescued from infamy. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SHIFT.

Shift. Zooks, I have toiled like a horse; quite

tired by Jupiter. And what shall I get for my pains? The old fellow here talks of making me easy for life. Easy! And what does he mean by easy? He'll make me an exciseman, I suppose, and so, with an ink-horn at my button-hole, and a taper switch in my hand, I shall run about gauging of beer-barrels. No, that will never do. This lad here is no fool. Foppish, indeed. He does not want parts; no, nor principles neither. I overheard his scene with the girl. I think I may trust him. I have a great mind to venture it. It is a shame to have him duped by this old don. It must not be, I'll in and unfold—Ha!—Egad, I have a thought too, which, if my heir apparent can execute, I shall still lie concealed, and perhaps be rewarded on both sides.

I have it,—'tis engendered, piping hot,
And now, Sir Knight, I'll match you with a plot.

[*Exit.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM *and* RICHARD WEALTHY.

R. Weal. Well, I suppose, by this time, you are satisfied what a scoundrel you have brought into the world, and are ready to finish your foolery.

Sir Will. Go to the catastrophe, good brother.

R. Weal. Let us have it over, then.

Sir Will. I have already alarmed all his tradesmen. I suppose we shall soon have him here, with a legion of bailiffs and constables.———Oh, you have my will about you?

R. Weal. Yes, yes.

Sir Will. It is almost time to produce it, or read him the clause that relates to his rejecting your daughter. That will do his business. But they come. I must return to my character.

Enter SHIFT.

Shift. Sir, sir, we are all in the wrong-box; our scheme is blown up; your son has detected Loader and Tally, and is playing the very devil within.

Sir Will. Oh, the bunglers!

Shift. Now for it, youngster.

Enter SIR GEORGE, *driving in* LOADER *and another.*

Sir Geo. Rascals, robbers, that, like locusts, mark the road you have taken, by the ruin and desolation you have left behind you.

Load. Sir George!

Sir Geo. And can youth, however cautious, be guarded against such deep-laid, complicated villany? Where are the rest of your diabolical crew? your auctioneer, usurer, and———O sir, are you here?———I am glad you have not escaped us, however.

Sir Will. What de devil is de matter?

Sir Geo. Your birth, which I believe an imposition, preserves you, however, from the discipline these rogues have received. A baron, a nobleman, a sharper! O shame! It is enough to banish all confidence from the world. On whose faith can we rely, when those whose honour is held as sacred as an oath, unmindful of their dignity, descend to rival pick-pockets in their infamous arts? What are these [*pulls out dice*] pretty implements? The fruits of your leisure hours! They are dexterously done. You have a fine mechanical turn.—Dick, secure the door.

MRS. COLE, *speaking as entering.*

Mrs. Cole. Here I am, at last. Well, and how

is your honour, and the little gentlewoman?—— Bless me! what is the matter here?

Sir Geo. I am, madam, treating your friends with a cold collation, and you are opportunely come for your share. The little gentlewoman is safe, and in much better hands than you designed her. Abominable hypocrite! who, tottering under the load of irreverend age and infamous diseases, inflexibly proceed in the practice of every vice, impiously prostituting the most sacred institutions to the most infernal purposes.

Mrs. Cole. I hope your honour ——

Sir Geo. Take her away. As you have been singular in your penitence, you ought to be distinguished in your penance; which, I promise you, shall be most publicly and plentifully bestowed.

[*Exit* MRS. COLE.

Enter DICK.

Dick. The constables, sir.

Sir Geo. Let them come in, that I may consign these gentlemen to their care. [*To* SIR WILLIAM.] Your letters of nobility you will produce in a court of justice. Though, if I read you right, you are one of those indigent, itinerant nobles of your own creation, which our reputation for hospitality draws hither in shoals, to the shame of our understanding, the impairing of our fortunes, and, when you are trusted, the betraying of our designs. Officers, do your duty.

Sir Will. Why, don't you know me?

Sir Geo. Just as I guessed. An impostor! He has recovered the free use of his tongue already.

Sir Will. Nay, but George.

Sir Geo. Insolent familiarity! away with him.

Sir Will. Hold, hold, a moment. Brother Richard, set this matter to rights.

R. Weal. Don't you know him?

Sir Geo. Know him! The very question is an affront.

R. Weal. Nay, I don't wonder at it. 'Tis your father, you fool.

Sir Geo. My father! Impossible!

Sir Will. That may be, but 'tis true.

Sir Geo. My father alive! Thus let me greet the blessing.

Sir Will. Alive! Ay, and I believe I shall not be in a hurry to die again.

Sir Geo. But, dear sir, the report of your death ———and this disguise———to what———

Sir Will. Don't ask any questions. Your uncle will tell you all. For my part, I am sick of the scheme.

R. Weal. I told you what would come of your politics.

Sir Will. You did so. But if it had not been for those clumsy scoundrels, the plot was as good a plot———O George, such discoveries I have to make! Within I'll unravel the whole.

Sir Geo. Perhaps, sir, I may match 'em.

Shift. Sir. [*Pulls him by the sleeve.*

Sir Geo. Never fear. It is impossible, gentlemen, to determine your fate, till this matter is more fully explained; till when, keep them in safe custody.——Do you know them, sir?

Sir Will. Yes, but that's more than they did me. I can cancel your debts there, and, I believe, prevail on those gentlemen to refund too——— But you have been a sad profligate young dog, George.———

Sir Geo. I cannot boast of my goodness, sir;

but I think I could produce you a proof, that I am not so totally destitute of ——

Sir Will. Aye; why then pr'ythee do.

Sir Geo. I have, sir, this day resisted a temptation that greater pretenders to morality might have yielded to. But I will trust myself no longer, and must crave your interposition and protection.

Sir Will. To what?

Sir Geo. I will attend you with the explanation in an instant. [*Exit.*

Sir Will. Pr'ythee, Shift, what does it mean?

Shift. I believe I can guess.

Sir Will. Let us have it.

Shift. I suppose the affair I overheard just now: a prodigious fine elegant girl, faith, that, discarded by her family, for refusing to marry her grandfather, fell into the hands of the venerable lady you saw, who, being the kind caterer for your son's amusements, brought her hither for a purpose obvious enough. But the young gentleman, touched with her story, truth, and tears, was converted from the spoiler of her honour to the protector of her innocence.

Sir Will. Look-ye there, brother, did not I tell you that George was not so bad at the bottom!

R. Weal. This does indeed atone for half the ——But they are here.

Enter SIR GEORGE *and* LUCY.

Sir Geo. Fear nothing, madam, you may safely rely on the ——

Lucy. My father!

R. Weal. Lucy!

Lucy. O, sir, can you forgive your poor distressed unhappy girl? You scarce can guess how hardly I have been used, since my banishment from your

paternal roof. Want, pining want, anguish, and shame, have been my constant partners.

Sir Will. Brother!

Sir Geo. Sir!

Lucy. Father!

R. Weal. Rise, child, 'tis I must ask thee forgiveness. Can'st thou forget the woes I have made thee suffer? Come to my arms once more, thou darling of my age.—What mischief had my rashness nearly completed. Nephew, I scarce can thank you as I ought, but ——

Sir Geo. I am richly paid, in being the happy instrument——— Yet, might I urge a wish ———

R. Weal. Name it.

Sir Geo. That you would forgive my follies of to-day; and, as I have been providentially the occasional guardian of your daughter's honour, that you would bestow on me that right for life.

R. Weal. That must depend on Lucy; her will, not mine, shall now direct her choice——— What says your father?

Sir Will. Me! Oh; I'll show you in an instant. Give me your hands. There, children, now you are joined, and the devil take him that wishes to part you.

Sir Geo. I thank you for us both.

R. Weal. Happiness attend you.

Sir Will. Now, brother, I hope you will allow me to be a good plotter. All this was brought to bear by my means.

Shift. With my assistance, I hope you will own, sir.

Sir Will. That's true, honest Shift, and thou shalt be richly rewarded; nay, George shall be your friend too. This Shift is an ingenious fellow, let me tell you, son.

Sir Geo. I am no stranger to his abilities, sir. But, if you please, we will retire. The various struggles of this fair sufferer require the soothing softness of a *sister's* love. And now, sir, I hope your fears for me are over; for had I not this motive to restrain my follies, yet I now know the town too well to be ever its bubble, and will take care to preserve, at least,

Some more estate, and principles, and wit,
Than brokers, bawds, and gamesters shall think fit.

SHIFT, *addressing himself to* SIR GEORGE.

And what becomes of your poor servant, *Shift*?
Your father talks of lending me *a lift*——
A great man's promise, when his turn is serv'd!
Capons on promises would soon be starv'd:
No, on myself alone, I'll now rely:
'Gad I've a thriving traffic in my eye ——
Near the mad mansions of Moorfields I'll bawl;
Friends, fathers, mothers, sisters, sons, and all,
Shut up your shops, and listen to my call.
With labour, toil, all second means dispense,
And live a rent-charge upon Providence.
Prick up your ears; a story now I'll tell,
Which once a widow, and her child befel——
I knew the mother, and her daughter well.
Poor, it is true, they were; but never wanted,
For whatsoe'er they ask'd, was always granted:

One fatal day, the matron's truth was tried,
She wanted meat and drink, and fairly cried.
[*Child.*] Mother, you cry! [*Moth.*] Oh, child, I've got no bread,
[*Child.*] What matters that? Why Providence an't dead!
With reason good, this truth the child might say,
For there came in at noon, that very day,
Bread, greens, potatoes, and a leg of mutton,
A better sure a table ne'er was put on:
Aye, that may be, ye cry, with those poor souls;
But ne'er had we a rasher for the coals.
And d'ye deserve it? How d'ye spend your days?
In pastimes, prodigality, and plays!
Let's go see *Foote!* Ah, *Foote's* a precious *limb!*
Old-nick will soon a football make of him!

For foremost rows in side-boxes you shove,
Think you to meet with side-boxes above?
Where giggling girls and powdered fops may sit,—
No, you will all be cramm'd into the pit,*
And crowd the house for *Satan's* benefit.
Oh, what, you snivel! well, do so no more;
Drop, to atone, your money at the door,
And (if I please)—I'll give it to the poor.

---

* *Variation.*—No, you'll be cramm'd together in *the pit.*

THE

LIAR;

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS;

As performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL, HAY-MARKET.

REMARKS.

WHEN this comedy appeared, which was in 1762, our author was engaged, with some others, in a periodical publication, entitled the "*Comic Theatre*," translations from the French; and on *the Menteur* of Corneille, after which Sir Richard Steele drew his *Lying Lovers*, did Foote raise the superstructure of his *Liar*. The mention of *de Vega* (the Spanish dramatist), in the *Prologue*, seems an acknowledgement arising from excessive candour. Although indebted very little to plot for its success, the lively incidents are so well managed, that none can read it without pleasure; the performance was also highly relished when the part of *Young Wilding* was represented by the late John Palmer, he *looking* the part so admirably, as to place the Author in the back-ground as to the *acting* of this part: Foote was, in fact, too unwieldly for a young scholar, newly broke away from the trammels of college.

As to the main jet of the piece—the mendacious *turn of mind* of Young Wilding—it must strike every one as extremely improbable that his father should remain ignorant so long of his son's *talent at embellishment;* but our satirist, who knew so well how to lash French manners in other respects, was himself caught in this piece of imitation: our neighbours (the French) require large concessions of the understanding, when they would work on the passions of an auditory, as their mere writers of every gender commonly do with their readers.

On its first appearance, *the Liar* was divided into three Acts, as here printed, but has been cut down to two.

PROLOGUE.

WHAT various revolutions in our art,
Since Thespis first sung ballads in a cart!
By nature framed the witty war to wage,
And lay the deep foundations of the stage,
From his own soil that bard his pictures drew:
The gaping crowd the mimic features knew,
And the broad jest with fire electric flew.
Succeeding times, more polished and refined,
To rigid rules the comic muse confined:
Robbed of the natural freedom of her song,
In artful measures now she floats along;
No sprightly sallies rouse the slum'bring pit;
Thalia, grown mere architect in wit,
To doors and ladders has confined her cares,
Convenient closets, and a snug back stairs;
'Twixt her and Satire has dissolved the league,
And jilted humour to enjoy intrigue.
To gain the suffrage of this polished age,
We bring to-night a stranger on the stage:
His *sire De Vega;* we confess this truth,
Lest you mistake him for a British youth.

Severe the censure on my feeble pen,
Neglecting manners, that she copies men:
Thus, if I hum or ha, or name report,
'Tis Serjeant Splitcause, from the Inns of Court;
If, at the age that ladies cease to dance,
To romp at Ranelagh, or read romance,
I draw a dowager inclined to man,
Or paint her rage for china or japan,
The true original is quickly known,
And lady Squab proclaim'd throughout the town.
But in the following group let no man dare
To claim a limb, nay, not a single hair:
What gallant Britan can be such a sot
To own the child a Spaniard has begot?

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JAMES ELLIOT, ...*Mr. Davis.*
OLD WILDING, *the Father*,.....*Mr. Castle.*
YOUNG WILDING, ...*Mr. Foote.*
PAPILLON,.....*Mr. Weston.*

MISS GRANTAM,.....*Mrs. Jeffries*
MISS GODFREY,.....*Mrs. Brown.*
KITTY, *the Maid*,.....*Mrs. Parsons.*

The SERVANTS.

SCENE—St. James's Park and the Neighbourhood.

THE

LIAR.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE—A Lodging.

YOUNG WILDING *and* PAPILLON *discovered.*

Y. Wild. And am I now, Papillon, perfectly equipped?

Pap. Personne mieux. Nobody better.

Y. Wild. My figure?

Pap. Fait a peindre.

Y. Wild. My air.

Pap. Libre.

Y. Wild. My address?

Pap. Parisien.

Y. Wild. My hat sits easily under my arm; not like the draggle-tail of my tattered academical habit.

Pap. Ah, *bien autre chose.*

Y. Wild. Why, then adieu, *Alma Mater,* and *bien venue la ville de Londres;* farewell to the schools, and welcome the theatres; presidents, proctors, and short commons, with long graces, must

now give place to plays, *bagnios*, and long tavern-bills, with no graces at all.

Pap. Ah, bravo, bravo!

Y. Wild. Well, but my dear Papillon, you must give me the *chart du pays:* this town is a new world to me; my provident papa, you know, would never suffer me near the smoke of London; and what can be his motive for permitting me now, I cannot readily conceive.

Pap. Ni moi.

Y. Wild. I shall, however, take the liberty to conceal my arrival from him for a few days.

Pap. Vous avez raison.

Y. Wild. Well, my Mentor, and how am I to manage? direct my road: where must I begin? But the debate is, I suppose, of consequence?

Pap. Vraiment.

Y. Wild. How long have you left Paris, Papillon?

Pap. Twelve, dirteen year.

Y. Wild. I can't compliment you upon your progress in English.

Pap. The accent is difficult.

Y. Wild. But here you are at home.

Pap. C'est vrai.

Y. Wild. No stranger to fashionable places.

Pap. Au fait.

Y. Wild. Acquainted with the fashionable figures of both sexes.

Pap. Sans doute.

Y. Wild. Well then, open your lecture: and, d'ye hear, Papillon, as you have the honour to be promoted from the mortifying condition of an humble valet to the important charge of a private tutor, let us discard all distance between us: see me ready to slake my thirst at your fountain of knowledge, my *Magnus Apollo*,

Pap. Here then I disclose my *Helicon* to my poetical pupil.

Y. Wild. Hey, Papillon!

Pap. Sir?

Y. Wild. What is this? Why you speak English!

Pap. Without doubt.

Y. Wild. But like a native.

Pap. To be sure.

Y. Wild. And what am I to conclude from all this?

Pap. Logically thus, sir: whoever speaks pure English is an Englishman: I speak pure English; *ergo*, I am an Englishman. There's a categorical syllogism for you—Major, Minor, and Consequence. What, do you think, sir, that whilst you was busy at Oxford, I was idle? no, no, no.

Y. Wild. Well, sir, but notwithstanding your pleasantry, I must have this matter explained.

Pap. So you shall, my good sir; but do not be in such a hurry: you cannot suppose I would give you the key, unless I meant you should open the door.

Y. Wild. Why, then, pr'ythee unlock.

Pap. Immediately. But by way of entering upon my post as preceptor, suffer me first to give you a hint: you must not expect, sir, to find here, as at Oxford, men appearing in their real characters; every body there, sir, knows that Dr. Mussy is a fellow of Maudlin, and Tom Trifle a student of Christchurch: but this town is one great comedy, in which not only the principles, but frequently the persons are feigned.

Y. Wild. A useful observation.

Pap. Why now, sir, at the first coffee-house I shall enter you, you will perhaps meet a man,

from whose decent sable dress, placid countenance, insinuating behaviour, short sword, with the waiter's civil addition of "a dish of coffee for Dr. Julap," you would suppose him to be a physician.

Y. Wild. Well?

Pap. Does not know *diascordium* from *diaculum*. An absolute French spy, concealed under the shelter of a huge medicinal periwig.

Y. Wild. Indeed!

Pap. A martial figure, too, it is odds but you will encounter, from whose scars, title, dress, and address, you would suppose to have had a share in every action since the peace of the Pyrenees—runner to a gaming-table, and bully to a bawdy-house. Battles, to be sure, he has been in—with the watch; and frequently a prisoner too—in the round-house.

Y. Wild. Amazing!

Pap. In short, sir, you will meet with lawyers who practise smuggling, and merchants who trade upon Hounslow-heath; reverend atheists, right honourable sharpers, and Frenchmen from the county of York.

Y. Wild. In the last list I presume you roll.

Pap. Just my situation.

Y. Wild. And pray, sir, what may be your motive for this whimsical transformation?

Pap. A very harmless one, I promise you: I would only avail myself at the expense of folly and prejudice.

Y. Wild. As how?

Pap. Why, sir———— But, to be better understood, I believe it will be necessary to give you a short sketch of the principal incidents of my life.

Y. Wild. Pr'ythee do,

Pap. Why then, you are to know, sir, that my former situation has been rather above my present condition; having once sustained the dignity of sub-preceptor to one of those cheap rural academies with which our county of *York* is so plentifully stocked.

Y. Wild. But to the point: why this disguise? why renounce your country?

Pap. There, sir, you make a little mistake; it was my country that renounced me.

Y. Wild. Explain.

Pap. In an instant: upon quitting the school, and first, coming to town, I got recommended to the compiler of the *Monthly Review.**

Y. Wild. What, an author too?

Pap. Oh, a voluminous one: the whole region of the *belles lettres* fell under my inspection; physic, divinity, and the mathematics, my mistress managed herself. There, sir, like another *Aristarch*, I dealt out fame and damnation at pleasure. In obedience to the caprice and commands of my master, I have condemned books I never read, and applauded the fidelity of a translation, without understanding one syllable of the original.

Y. Wild. Ah! why I thought acuteness of discernment and depth of knowledge were necessary to accomplish *a critic.*

Pap. Yes, sir; but not a *monthly* one. Our method was very concise: we copy the title page

* *Monthly Review.*] A periodical critic at that time enjoying great reputation, and scattering its behests with a high hand. Its projector and ostensible editor, Richard Griffiths [afterwards LL.D.], was a bookseller in the Strand, of industrious habits as a compiler under various signatures. Many articles were well written, but of the department subtitled "Monthly Catalogue," it was said that Griffiths and his wife were in the habit of hitting them off at the breakfast table,

of a new book; we never go any further: if we are ordered to praise it, we have at hand about ten words, which, scattered through as many *periods*, effectually does the business; as, "laudable design, happy arrangement, spirited language, nervous sentiment, elevation of thought, conclusive argument;" if we are to decry, then we have, "unconnected, flat, false, illiberal stricture, reprehensible, unnatural:" and thus, sir, we *pepper* the author, and soon rid our hands of his work.

Y. Wild. A short recipe.

Pap. And yet, sir, you have all the materials that are necessary: these are the arms with which we engage authors of every kind. To us all subjects are equal; plays or sermons, poetry or politics, music or midwifery, it is the same thing.

Y. Wild. How came you to resign this easy employment?

Pap. It would not answer. Notwithstanding what we say, people will judge for themselves: our work hung upon hand, and all I could get from the publisher was four shillings a week, and my small beer. Poor pittance!

Y. Wild. Poor, indeed.

Pap. Oh, half-starved me!

Y. Wild. What was your next change?

Pap. I was mightily puzzled to choose. Some would have had me turn player, and others methodist preacher; but as I had no money to build me a tabernacle, I did not think it could answer; and as to player—whatever might happen to me, I was determined not to bring a disgrace upon my family, and so I resolved to turn footman.

Y. Wild. Wisely resolved.

Pap. Yes, sir, but not so easily executed.

Y. Wild. No!

Pap. Oh no, sir. Many a weary step have I taken after a place. Here I was too old, there I was too young; here the last livery was too big, there it was too little; here I was awkward, there I was knowing; *madam* disliked me at this house; her ladyship's woman at the next; so that I was as much puzzled to find a place, as the great cynic philosopher to discover an honest man. In short, I was quite in a state of despair, when chance threw an old friend in my way that quite retrieved my affairs.

Y. Wild. Pray who might he be?

Pap. A little bit of a *Swiss* genius, who had been French usher with me at the same school in the country. I opened my melancholy story to him over three-pennyworth of beef-à-la-mode, in a cellar, in St. Ann's. My little foreign friend pursed up his lantern jaws, and with a shrug of contempt, Ah, *maître Jean, vous n'avez pas la politique;* you have no finesse: to trive here you must study the folly of your own country." "How, monsieur!" "*Taisez vous.* Keep a your tongue! *autre fois!* I teach you speak French, now I teach a you to forget English. Go vid me to my lodgement, I vil give you proper dress, den go present yourself to de same hotels, de ver same house; you will find al de doors dat was shut in your face as footman Anglois, will fly open demselve to a French *valet de chambre.*"

Y. Wild. Well, Papillon?

Pap. Gad, sir, I thought it was but an honest artifice, so I determined to follow my friend's advice.

Y. Wild. Did it succeed?

Pap. Better than expectation: my tawny face, long *queüe*, and broken English, was a *pass-par*

tout. Besides, when I am out of place, this disguise procures me many resources.

Y. Wild. As how?

Pap. Why, at a pinch, sir, I am either a teacher of tongues, a *friseur*, a dentist, or a dancing-master; these, sir, are hereditary professions to Frenchmen. But now, sir, to the point: as you were pleased to be so candid with me, I was determined to have no reserve with you. You have studied books, I have studied men; you want advice, and I have some at your service.

Y. Wild. Well, I'll be your customer.

Pap. But guard my secret: if I should be so unfortunate as to lose your place, don't shut me out from every other.

Y. Wild. You may rely upon me.

Pap. In a few years I shall be in a condition to retire from business; but whether I shall settle at my family seat, or pass over to the Continent, is as yet undetermined. Perhaps, in gratitude to the country, I may purchase a marquisate near Paris, and spend the money I have got by their means generously amongst them.

Y. Wild. A grateful intention. But let us sally forth. Where do we open?

Pap. Let us see;—one o'clock—it is a fine day: the mall will be crowded.

Y. Wild. Allons.

Pap. But don't stare, sir: survey every thing with an air of habit and indifference.

Y. Wild. Never fear.

Pap. But I would, sir, crave a moment's audience, upon a subject that may prove very material to you.

Y. Wild. Proceed.

Pap. You will pardon my presumption; but

you have, my good master, one little foible that I could wish you to correct.

Y. Wild. What is it?

Pap. And yet it is a pity too, you do it so very well.

Y. Wild. Pr'ythee be plain.

Pap. You have, sir, a lively imagination, with a most happy turn for invention.

Y. Wild. Well.

Pap. But now and then in your narratives you are hurried, by a flow of spirits, to border upon the improbable———a little given to the marvellous.

Y. Wild. I understand you: what [*probably*], I am somewhat subject to lying?

Pap. Oh, pardon me, sir; I do not say that; no, no, only a little apt to *embellish;* that's all. To be sure, it is a fine gift; that there is no disputing: but men in general are so [*very*] stupid, so rigorously attached to matter of fact——And yet, this talent of yours is the very soul and *spirit of poetry:* and, why it should not be the same in *prose*, I cannot for my life determine.

Y. Wild. You would advise me, then, not to be quite so poetical in my prose?

Pap. Why, sir, if you would descend a little to the grovelling comprehension of *the million*, I think it would be as well.

Y. Wild. I'll think of it.

Pap. Besides, sir, in this town, people are more smoky and suspicious. Oxford, you know, is the seat of the muses, and a man is naturally permitted more ornament and garniture to his conversation than they will allow in this latitude.

Y. Wild. I believe you are right. But we shall be late. D'ye hear me, Papillon? if at any

time you find me growing too poetical, give me a hint: your advice shall not be thrown away.

[*Exit.*

Pap. I wish it may not; but the disease is too rooted to be quickly removed. Lord! how often I have sweated for him! yet he is all the time as unembarrassed, easy, and fluent, as if he really believed what he said. Well, to be sure he is a great master: it is a thousand pities his genius could not be converted to some public service: I think the government should employ him to answer the *Brussels Gazette.** I'll be hanged if he is not too many for *Monsieur Maubert*, at his own weapons.

[*Exit.*

SCENE—The Park.

Enter MISS GRANTAM *and* MISS GODFREY, *and* SERVANT.

M. Gr. John, let the chariot go round to Spring-Gardens for your mistress, and I shall call at Lady Bab's, Miss Arabella Allnight's, the Countess of Crumple's, and the *tall man's*, this morning. My dear Miss Godfrey, what trouble I have had to get you out! why, child, you are as tedious as a long mourning. Do you know now, that of all places of public rendezvous I honour the park? forty thousand million of times preferable to the play-house! Don't you think so, my dear?

* *Brussels Gazette.*]—A pass-word for lies, printed or oral: the press of that far-famed city being under control of the Austrian Archdukes, and their cause (of domination) requiring lies for its support, the varlets supplied *quantum sufficit* for the cormorants; but the power so supported dwindled and fell in twenty years after the LIAR appeared.

M. God. They are both well in their way.

M. Gr. Way! why the purpose of both is the same; to meet company, isn't it? what, d'ye think I go there for the plays, or come here for the trees? ha, ha! well, that is well enough. But, O *Gemini!* I beg a million of pardons: you are a prude, and have no relish for the little innocent liberties with which a fine woman may indulge herself in public.

M. God. Liberties, in public!

M. Gr. Yes, child, such as encoring a song at an opera, interrupting a play in a critical scene of distress, hallooing to a pretty fellow across the Mall, as loud as if you were calling a coach. Why, do you know now, my dear, that by a lucky stroke in dress, and a few high airs of my own making, I have had the good fortune to be gazed at, and followed by as great a crowd, on a Sunday, as if I was the *Tripoly* ambassador?

M. God. The *good fortune,* madam! Surely, the wish of every decent woman is to be unnoticed in public.

M. Gr. Decent! oh, my dear queer creature, what a phrase have you found out for a woman of fashion! Decency is, child, a mere bourgeois, plebeian quality, fit only for those who pay court to the world, and not for us to whom the world pays court. Upon my word, you must enlarge your ideas: you are a fine girl, and we must not have you lost; I'll undertake you myself. But, as I was saying ——Pray, my dear, what was I saying?

M. God. I prôfess I don't recollect.

M. Gr. Hey!—Oh, ah, the park. One great reason for my loving the park is, that one has so many opportunities of creating connexions.

M. God. Madam!

M. Gr. Nay, don't look grave. Why, do you know, that all my male friendships are formed in this place?

M. God. It is an odd spot: but you must pardon me if I doubt the possibility.

M. Gr. Oh, I will convince you in a moment; for here seems to be coming a good smart figure that I do not recollect. I will throw out a lure.

M. God. Nay, for heaven's sake!

M. Gr. I am determined, child: that is ——

M. God. You will excuse my withdrawing.

M. Gr. Oh, please yourself, my dear.

[*Exit* MISS GODFREY.

Enter YOUNG WILDING *with* PAPILLON.

Y. Wild. Your ladyship's handkerchief, madam.

M. Gr. I am, sir, concerned at the trouble —

Y. Wild. A most happy incident for me, madam; as chance has given me an honour in one lucky minute, that the most diligent attention has not been able to procure for me in the whole tedious round of a revolving year.

M. Gr. Is this meant to me, sir?

Y. Wild. To whom else, madam? Surely, you must have marked my respectful assiduity, my uninterrupted attendance; to plays, operas, balls, routs, and ridottas; I have pursued you like your shadow; I have besieged your door, for a glimpse of your exit and entrance, like a distressed creditor, who has no arms against privilege but perseverance.

Pap. So, now he is in for it; stop him who can.

Y. Wild. In short, madam, ever since I quitted America, which I take now to be about a year, I have as faithfully guarded the live-long night, your

ladyship's portal, as a sentinel the powder-magazine in a fortified city.

Pap. Quitted America! well *pulled.**

M. Gr. You have served in America, then?

Y. Wild. Full four years, madam: and during that whole time, not a single action of consequence, but I had an opportunity to signalize myself; and I think I may, without vanity, affirm I did not miss the occasion. You have heard of Quebec, I presume?

Pap. What the deuce is he driving at now?

Y. Wild. The project to surprise that place was thought a happy expedient, and the first mounting the breach a gallant exploit. There, indeed, the whole army did me justice.

M. Gr. I have heard the honour of that conquest attributed to another name.

Y. Wild. The mere taking the town, madam. But that's a trifle: sieges now a-days are reduced to certainties; it is amazing how minutely exact we, who know the business, are at calculation: for instance now, we will suppose the commander-in-chief, addressing himself to me, was to say, "Colonel, I want to reduce that fortress; what will be the expense?" "Why, please your highness, the reduction of that fortress will cost you one thousand and two lives, sixty-nine legs, ditto arms, four score fractures, with about twenty dozen of flesh wounds."

M. Gr. And you should be near the mark?

Y. Wild. To an odd joint ma'am. But, madam, it is not to the French alone that my feats are con-

* *Pulled* the long bow. An archery notion. The practitioners in this art related such strange stories of their achievements, that people cried "twang" at each lie, in imitation of the sound of the bow-string.

fined: Cherokees, Catabaws, with all the aws and ees of the continent, have felt the force of my arms.

Pap. This is too much, sir.

Y. Wild. Hands off! Nor am I less adroit at a treaty, madam, than terrible in battle. To me we owe the friendship of the *Five Nations,** and I had the first honour of smoking the pipe of peace with the *Little Carpenter.*

M. Gr. And so young!

Y. Wild. This gentleman, though a Frenchman and an enemy, I had the fortune to deliver from the Mohawks, whose prisoner he had been for nine years. He gives a most entertaining account of their laws and customs: he shall present you with the *wampum-belt,* and a scalping-knife. Will you permit him, madam, just to give you a taste of the military dance, with a short specimen of their war-whoop?

Pap. For heaven's sake!

M. Gr. The place is too public.

Y. Wild. In short, madam, after having gathered as many laurels abroad as would garnish a Gothic cathedral at Christmas, I returned "to reap the harvest of the well-fought field." Here it was my good fortune to encounter you: then was the victor vanquished; what the enemy could never accomplish, your eyes in an instant achieved; prouder to serve here than command in chief elsewhere; and more glorious in wearing your chains, than in triumphing over the vanquished world.

M. Gr. I have got here a most heroical lover:

* Five Indian Nations of Canada, and on the back settlements of North America, now extinct as such. Cadwallader Colden had recently published some strange *stories* about their habits and customs. The *Little Carpenter* was the name of a chief most familiar with Colden.

but I see Sir James Elliot coming, and must dismiss him. [*Aside.*] Well, sir, I accept the tender of your passion, and may find a time to renew our acquaintance; at present it is necessary we should separate.

Y. Wild. "Slave to your will, I live but to obey you." But may I be indulged with the knowledge of your residence.

M. Gr. Sir?

Y. Wild. Your place of abode.

M. Gr. Oh, sir, you cannot want to be acquainted with that; you have a whole year stood sentinel at my ladyship's portal.

Y. Wild. Madam, I—I—I——

M. Gr. Oh, sir, your servant. Ha, ha, ha! What, you are caught! Ha, ha, ha! Well, he has a most intrepid assurance. Adieu, my Mars. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Pap. That last was an unlucky question, sir.

Y. Wild. A little *mal-a-propos*, I must confess.

Pap. A man should have a good memory who deals much in this *poetical prose.*

Y. Wild. Poh! I'll soon re-establish my credit. But I must know who this girl is. Hark'ye, Papillon, could you not contrive to pump out of her footman —I see there he stands—the name of his mistress?

Pap. I will try. [*Exit.*

WILDING *retires to the back of the Stage.*

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT, *and* SERVANT.

Sir J. Music and an entertainment?

Ser. Yes, sir.

Sir J. Last night, upon the water?

Ser. Upon the water, last night.

Sir J. Who gave it?

Ser. That, sir, I can't say.

To them WILDING.

Y. Wild. Sir James Elliot, your most devoted.

Sir J. Ah, my dear Wilding! you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild. You will pardon my impatience; I interrupted you; you seemed upon an interesting subject.

Sir J. Oh, an affair of gallantry.

Y. Wild. Of what kind?

Sir J. A young lady regaled last night by her lover, on the Thames.

Y. Wild. As how?

Sir J. A band of music in boats.

Y. Wild. Were they good performers?

Sir J. The best. Then conducted to Marble-Hall, where she found a magnificent collation.

Y. Wild. Well ordered?

Sir J. With elegance. After supper a ball; and, to conclude the night, a firework.

Y. Wild. Was the last well designed?

Sir J. Superb.

Y. Wild. And happily executed?

Sir J. Not a single *faux pas.*

Y. Wild. And you don't know who gave it?

Sir J. I cannot even guess.

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir J. Why do you laugh?

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha! It was me.

Sir J. You!

Pap. You, sir!

Y. Wild. Moi—me.

Pap. So, so, so; he is *entered* again.

Sir J. Why, you are fortunate to find a mistress in so short a space of time.

Y. Wilding. Short! why man, I have been in London these six weeks.

Pap. O Lord, O Lord!

Y. Wild. It is true: not caring to encounter my father, I have rarely ventured out but at nights.

Pap. I can hold no longer. Dear sir——

Y. Wild. Peace, puppy!

Pap. A curb to your poetical vein.

Y. Wild. I shall curb your impertinence [presently]— But since the story is got abroad I will, my dear friend, treat you with all the particulars.

Sir J. I shall hear it with pleasure.—This is a lucky adventure: but he must not know he is my rival. [*Aside.*]

Y. Wild. Why, sir, between six and seven my goddess embarked, at Somerset-house-stairs, in one of the companies' barges, gilt and hung with damask, expressly for the occasion.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Y. Wild. At the cabin-door she was accosted by a beautiful boy, who, in the garb of a Cupid, paid her some compliments in verse of my own composing: the conceits were pretty; allusions to Venus and the sea—the lady and the Thames—no great matter; but, however, well timed, and, what was better, well taken.

Sir J. Doubtless.

Pap. At what a rate he runs on!

Y. Wild. As soon as we had gained the centre of the river, two boats full of trumpets, French horns, and other martial music, struck up their sprightly strains, from the Surrey-side, which were echoed by a suitable number of lutes, flutes, and hautboys from the opposite shore. In this state, the oars keeping time, we majestically sailed along till the arches of the New Bridge gave a pause,

and an opportunity for an elegant dessert in Dresden china, by Robinson. Here the repast closed, with a few favourite airs from Eliza, Tenducci, and the Mattei.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Y. Wild. Opposite Lambeth I had prepared a naval engagement, in which Boscawen's victory over the French was repeated: the action was conducted by one of the commanders on that expedition, and not a single incident omitted.

Sir J. Surely you exaggerate a little.

Pap. Yes, yes, this battle will sink him.

Y. Wild. True to the letter, upon my honour. I sha'n't trouble you with the description of our collation, ball, or *feu d'artifice*, nor with the thousand little incidental amusements that chance or design produced: it is enough to know, that all that could flatter the senses, fire the imagination, or gratify the expectation, was there produced in lavish abundance.

Sir J. The sacrifice was, I presume, grateful to your *deity*.

Y. Wild. Upon that subject you must pardon my silence.

Pap. Modest creature!

Sir J. I wish you joy of your success.—For the present you will excuse me.

Y. Wild. Nay, but stay and hear the conclusion.

Sir. J. For that I shall seize another occasion. [*Exit.*

Pap. Nobly performed, sir.

Y. Wild. Yes, happily hit off, I think.

Pap. May I take the liberty to offer one question?

Y. Wild. Freely.

Pap. Pray, sir, are you often visited with these waking dreams?

Y. Wild. Dreams! what dost mean by dreams?

Pap. These ornamental reveries, these frolics of fancy, which, in the judgement of the vulgar, would be deemed absolute *flams*.

Y. Wild. Why, Papillon, you have but a poor, narrow, circumscribed genius.

Pap. I must own, sir, I have not sublimity sufficient to relish the full fire of your Pindaric muse.

Y. Wild. No; a plebeian soul! But I will animate thy clay: mark my example, follow my steps, and in time thou may'st rival thy master.

Pap. Never, never, sir: I have not talents to fight battles without blows, and give feasts that cost me not a farthing. Besides, sir, to what purpose are all these embellishments? Why tell the lady you have been in London a year?

Y. Wild. The better to plead the *length*, and consequently the *strength*, of my passion.

Pap. But why, sir, a soldier?

Y. Wild. How little thou knowest of the sex! What, now, I suppose thou would'st have me attack them in mood and figure, by a pedantic, classical quotation, or a pompous parade of jargon from the schools. Dost really think that women are to be got like *degrees?*

Pap. Nay, sir——

Y. Wild. No, no; the *savoir vivre* is the science for them; the man of war is their man: they must be taken like towns, by lines of approach, counterscarps, angles, trenches, cohorns, and covert-ways; then enter sword in hand, pellmell! oh, how they melt at the Gothic names of General Swapinback, Count Rousoumousky, Prince Montecuculi, and Marshal Fustinburgh! men may say what they will of their Ovid, their Petrarch, and their Waller, but I'll undertake to do more business by the single aid of the London Gazette, than by all the sighing,

dying, crying crotchets, the whole race of rhymers ever produced.

Pap. Very well, sir; this is all very lively; but remember the travelling pitcher: if you do not one time or other, under favour, lie yourself into some confounded scrape, I will be content to be hanged!

Y. Wild. Do you think so, Papillon?—And whenever that happens, if I do not lie myself out of it again, why then I will be content to be crucified. And so, along after the lady. [*Stops short, going out.*] Zounds, here comes my father! I must fly. Watch him, Papillon, and bring me word to *the Cardigan.* [*Exeunt separately.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE—A Tavern.

YOUNG WILDING *and* PAPILLON *rising from Table.*

Y. Wild. Gad, I had like to have run into the old gentleman's mouth.

Pap. It is pretty nearly the same thing; for I saw him join Sir James Elliot: so your arrival is no longer a secret.

Y. Wild. Why, then I must lose my pleasure, and you your preferment: I must submit to the dull decency of a sober family, and you to the customary duties of brushing and powdering. But I was so fluttered at meeting my father, that I forgot the fair one: pr'ythee who is she?

Pap. There were two.

Y. Wild. That I saw.

Pap. From her footman I learnt her name was Godfrey.

Y. Wild. And her fortune?

Pap. Immense.

Y. Wild. Single, I hope?

Pap. Certainly.

Y. Wild. Then will I have her.

Pap. What, whether she will or no?

Y. Wild. Yes.

Pap. How will you manage that?

Y. Wild. By making it impossible for her to marry any one else.

Pap. I don't understand you, sir.

Y. Wild. Oh, I shall only have recourse to that talent you so mightily admire. You will see, by the circulation of a few anecdotes, how soon I will get rid of my rivals.

Pap. At the expense of the lady's reputation, perhaps.

Y. Wild. That will be as it happens.

Pap. And have you no qualms, sir?

Y. Wild. Why, where's the injury?

Pap. No injury to ruin her fame!

Y. Wild. I will restore it to her again!

Pap. How?

Y. Wild. Turn tinker, and mend it myself.

Pap. Which way?

Y. Wild. The old way; solder it by marriage: that, you know, is the modern salve for every sore.

Enter WAITER.

Wai. An elderly gentleman, to inquire for Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. For me! what sort of a being is it?

Wai. Being, sir!

Y. Wild. Ay! how is he drest?

Wai. In a tie-wig and snuff-coloured coat.

Pap. Zooks, sir, it is your father.

Y. Wild. Show him up. [*Exit* WAITER.

Pap. And what must I do?

Y. Wild. Recover your broken English, but preserve your rank: I have a reason for it.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Your servant, sir: you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild. You have just prevented me, sir: I was preparing to do my duty to you.

O. Wild. If you thought it a duty, you should, I think, have sooner discharged it.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Was it quite so decent, Jack, to be six weeks in town, and conceal yourself only from me?

Y. Wild. Six weeks! I have scarce been six hours.

O. Wild. Come, come; I am better informed.

Y. Wild. Indeed, sir, you are imposed upon. This gentleman, (whom first give me leave to have the honour of introducing to you,) this, sir, is the marquis de *Chateau Briant*,* of an ancient house in Brittany; who, travelling through England, chose to make Oxford for some time the place of his residence, where I had the happiness of his acquaintance.

O. Wild. Does he speak English.

Y. Wild. Not fluently, but understands it perfectly.

Pap. Pray, sir.

O. Wild. Any services, sir, that I can render you here you may readily command.

Pap. Beaucoup d'honneur.

Y. Wild. This gentleman, I say, sir, whose quality and country are sufficient securities for his veracity, will assure you that yesterday we left Oxford together.

---

* "*Sic in orig.*" The political reader will not fail to mark the strange coincidence between this assumption of a name and a real character of these times.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Pap. C'est vrai.

O. Wild. This is amazing. I was, at the same time informed of another circumstance too, that, I confess, made me a little uneasy, as it interfered with a favorite scheme of my own.

Y. Wild. What could that be, pray, sir?

O. Wild. That you had conceived a violent affection for a fair lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And had given her very gallant and very expensive proofs of your passion.

Y. Wild. Me, sir!

O. Wild. Particularly last night: music, a collation, balls, and fireworks.

Y. Wild. Monsieur le marquis!—And pray, sir, who could tell you all this?

O. Wild. An old friend of yours.

Y. Wild. His name, if you please.

O. Wild. Sir James Elliot.

Y. Wild. Yes; I thought he was the man.

O. Wild. Your reason.

Y. Wild. Why, sir, though Sir James Elliot has a great many good qualities, and is, upon the whole, a valuable man, yet he has one fault which has long determined me to drop his acquaintance.

O. Wild. What may that be?

Y. Wild. Why, you can't, sir, be a stranger to his prodigious skill in the traveller's talent.

O. Wild. How!

Y. Wild. Oh, notorious to a proverb———His friends, who are tender of his fame, gloss over his foible, by calling him an agreeable novelist; and so he is, with a vengeance: why, he will tell you more lies in an hour, than all the circulating libraries, put together, will publish in a year.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Y. Wild. Oh, he is [reckoned] the modern *Mandeville** at Oxford: he was always distinguished by the facetious appellation of *the bouncer*.

O. Wild. Amazing!

Y. Wild. Lord, sir, he is so well understood in his own country, that, at the last Hereford assizes, a cause, as clear as the sun, was absolutely thrown away by his being merely mentioned as a witness.

O. Wild. A strange turn.

Y. Wild. Unaccountable. But there, I think, they went a little too far; for, if it had come to an oath, I do not think he would have bounced, either; but in common occurrences there is no repeating after him. Indeed, my great reason for dropping him was, that my credit began to be a little suspected too.

Pap. Poor gentleman!

O. Wild. Why, I never heard this of him.

Y. Wild. That may be: but, can there be a stronger proof of his practice, than the flam he has been telling you, of fireworks, and the Lord knows what? And I dare swear, sir, he was very fluent and florid in his description.

O. Wild. Extremely.

O. Wild. Yes, that is just his way; and not a syllable of truth from the beginning to the ending; eh, marquis?

Pap. Oh, dat is all a fiction, upon mine honour.

Y. Wild. You see, sir.

O. Wild. Clearly. I really cannot help pitying

---

* *Mandeville's* "Fables of the Bees" is alluded to: written with a political bias; that book was as highly praised by one party as it was loudly execrated by the other —both, however, concurred in the opinion that the author *lied* egregiously.

the poor man. I have heard of people, who, by long habit, become a kind of constitutional liars.

Y. Wild. Your observation is just; that is exactly his case.

Pap. I'm sure it is yours.

O. Wild. Well, sir, I suppose we shall see you this evening?

Y. Wild. The marquis has an appointment with some of his countrymen, which I have promised to attend; besides, sir, as he is an entire stranger in town, he may want my little services.

O. Wild. Where can I see you in about an hour? I have a short visit to make, in which you are deeply concerned.

Y. Wild. I shall attend your commands; but where?

O. Wild. Why, here. Marquis, I am your obedient servant.

Pap. Votre serviteur très humble.

[*Exit* OLD WILDING.

Y. Wild. So, Papillon; that difficulty is despatched. I think I am even with Sir James for his tattling.

Pap. Most ingeniously managed: but are not you afraid of the consequence?

Y. Wild. I do not comprehend you.

Pap. A future explanation between the parties.

Y. Wild. That may embarrass: but the day is distant. I warrant I will bring myself off.

Pap. It is in vain for me to advise.

Y. Wild. Why, to say truth, I do begin to find my system attended with danger: give me your hand, Papillon—I will reform.

Pap. Ah, sir!

Y. Wild. I positively will. Why, this practice may in time destroy my credit.

Pap. That is pretty well done already. [*Aside.*]

Y. Wild. Well, if I don't turn out the merest dull matter-of-fact-fellow——But, Papillon, I must scribble a billet to my new flame. I think her name is——

Pap. Godfrey; her father, an India governor shut up in a strong room at Calcutta, left her all his wealth: she lives near Miss Grantam, by Grosvenor-square.

Y. Wild. A governor!—oh ho!—Bushels of rupees, and pecks of pagodas, I reckon.——Well, I long to be rummaging.—But the old gentleman will soon return: I will hasten to finish my letter—But, Papillon, what could my father mean by a visit in which I am deeply concerned?

Pap. I can't even guess.

Y. Wild. I shall know presently.—To Miss Godfrey, formerly of Calcutta, now residing in Grosvenor-square.—Papillon, I wo'n't tell her a word of a lie.

Pap. You will not, sir?

Y. Wild. No; it would be ungenerous to deceive a lady. No; I will be open, candid, and sincere.

Pap. And if you are, it will be for the first time.

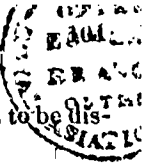
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE—Miss GRANTAM *and Miss* GODFREY.

M. God. And you really like this gallant spark?

M. Gr. Prodigiously. Oh, I'm quite in love with his assurance! I wonder who he is: he can't have been long in town: a young fellow of his easy impudence must have soon made his way to the best of company.

M. God. By way of amusement, he may prove no disagreeable acquaintance; but you can't, surely, have any serious designs upon him.



M. Gr. Indeed but I have.

M. God. And poor Sir James Elliot is to be discarded at once?

M. Gr. Oh, no.

M. God. What is your intention in regard to him?

M. Gr. Eh?—I cannot tell you. Perhaps, if I don't like this new man better, I may marry him.

M. God. Thou art a strange giddy girl.

M. Gr. Quite the reverse; a perfect pattern of prudence: why, would you have me less careful of my person than my purse?

M. God. My dear!

M. Gr. Why I say, child, my fortune being in *money*; as I have some in India-bonds, some in the Bank, some on this loan, some on the other; so that if one fund fails, I have a sure resource in the rest.

M. God. Very true.

M. Gr. Well, my dear, just so I manage my love affairs: if I should not like this man—if he should not like me—if we should quarrel—if, if—or in short, if any of *the ifs* should happen, which you know break engagements every day, why, by this means I shall never be at a loss.

M. God. Quite provident. Well, and pray on how many different securities have you at present placed out your love?

M. Gr. Three: the sober Sir James Elliot, the new America-man, and this morning I expect a formal proposal from an old friend of my father's.

M. God. Mr. Wilding.

M. Gr. Yes; but I don't reckon much upon him; for you know, my dear, what can I do with an awkward, raw, college cub? Though, upon second thoughts, that mayn't be too bad neither; for as I must have the fashioning of him, he may be easily moulded to one's mind.

16617

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Wilding, madam.

M. Gr. Show him in. [*Exit* SERVANT.] You need not go, my dear; we have no particular business.

M. God. I wonder now what she calls particular business.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Ladies, your servant. I wait upon you, madam, with a request from my son, that he may be permitted the honour of kissing your hand.

M. Gr. Your son is in town, then?

O. Wild. He came last night, mad m; and, though but just from the university, I think I may venture to affirm, with as little the air of a pedant as ——

M. Gr. I don't question the accomplishments of your son, Mr. Wilding, and shall own too, that his being descended from the old friend of my father, is to me the strongest recommendation.

O. Wild. You honour me, madam.

M. Gr. But, sir, I have something to say—

O. Wild. Pray, madam, speak out; it is impossible to be too explicit on these important occasions.

M. Gr. Why then, sir, to a man of your wisdom and experience I need not observe, that the loss of a parent to counsel and direct at this solemn crisis has made a greater degree of personal prudence necessary in me.

O. Wild. Perfectly right, madam.

M. Gr. We live, sir, in a very censorious world: a young woman cannot be too much upon her guard; nor should I choose to admit any man in the quality of a lover, if there was not at least a strong probability ——

O. Wild. Of a more intimate connexion. I

hope, madam, you have heard nothing to the disadvantage of my son.

M. Gr. Not a syllable: but you know, sir, there are such things in nature as unaccountable antipathies, aversions, that we take at first sight: I should be glad there could be no danger of that.

O. Wild. I understand you, madam; you shall have all the satisfaction imaginable: Jack is to meet me immediately; I will conduct him under your window; and if his *figure* has the misfortune to displease, I will take care his addresses shall never offend you. Your most obedient servant. [*Exit.*

M. Gr. Now, there is a polite, sensible, old father for you.

M. God. Yes; and a very discreet, prudent daughter he is likely to have. Oh, you are a great hypocrite, *Kitty*.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. A letter for you, madam. [*To Miss* GODFREY.] Sir James Elliot, to wait on your ladyship. [*To Miss* GRANTAM.] [*Exit.*

M. Gr. Lord, I hope he wo'n't stay long. Here he comes, and seems entirely wrapt up in the dismals: what can be the matter now?

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir J. In passing by your door, I took the liberty, madam, of inquiring after your health.

M. Gr. Very obliging. I hope, sir, you received a favourable account.

Sir J. I did not know but you might have caught cold last night.

M. Gr. Cold! why, sir, I hope I did not sleep with my bed-chamber window open.

Sir J. Madam!

M. Gr. Sir!

Sir J. No, madam; but it was rather hazardous to stay so late upon the water.

M. Gr. Upon the water!

Sir J. Not but the variety of amusements, it must be owned, were a sufficient temptation.

M. Gr. What can he be driving at now!

Sir J. And pray, madam, what think you of Young Wilding? is not he a gay, agreeable, sprightly——

M. Gr. I never give my opinion of people I don't know.

Sir J. You don't know him!

M. Gr. No.

Sir. J. And his father, I did not meet at your door!

M. Gr. Most likely you did.

Sir J. I am glad you own that, however: but, for the son, you never——

M. Gr. Sat eyes upon him.

Sir J. Really?

M. Gr. Really.

Sir J. Finely supported. Now, madam, do you know, that one of us is just going to make a very ridiculous figure?

M. Gr. Sir, I never had the least doubt of your talents for excelling in that way.

Sir J. Madam, you do me honour: but it does not happen to fall to my lot upon this occasion, however.

M. Gr. And that is a wonder!—Well, then, I am to be the fool of the comedy, I suppose.

Sir J. Admirably rallied! But I shall dash the spirit of that triumphant laugh.

M. Gr. I dare the attack. Come on, sir.

Sir J. Know then, and blush, if you are not as lost to shame as dead to decency, that I am no stranger to all last night's transactions.

M. Gr. Indeed!

Sir J. From your first entering the barge at Somerset-house, to your last landing at Whitehall.

M. Gr. Surprising!

Sir J. Cupids, collations, feasts, fireworks, all have reached me.

M. Gr. Why, you deal in magic.

Sir J. My intelligence is as natural as it is infallible.

M. God. May I be indulged with the name of your informer.

Sir J. Freely, madam. Only the very individual spark to whose folly you were indebted for this gallant profusion.

M. Gr. But his name?

Sir J. Young Wilding.

M. Gr. You had this story from him?

Sir J. I had.

M. Gr. From Wilding!—That is amazing.

Sir J. Oh, ho! what, you are confounded at last; and no evasion, to subterfuge, no——

M. Gr. Look ye, Sir James; what you can mean by this strange story, and very extraordinary behaviour, it is impossible for me to conjecture; but, if it is meant as an artifice to palliate your infidelity to me, less pains would have answered your purpose as well.

Sir J. Oh, madam, [as for that] I know you are provided.

M. Gr. Matchless insolence! As you cannot expect that I should be prodigiously pleased with the subject of this visit, you wo'n't be surprised at my wishing it as short as possible.

Sir J. I do not wonder you feel pain at my presence; but you may rest secure you will have no interruption from me; and I really think it would be pity to part two people so exactly formed for each other. Your ladyship's servant. [*Going.*] But, madam, though your sex secures you from any further resentment, yet the present object of your favour may have something to fear. [*Exit.*

M. Gr. Very well. Now, my dear, I hope you will acknowledge the prudence of my plan. To what a pretty condition I must have been reduced if my hopes had rested upon one lover alone.

M. God. But are you sure that your method to multiply, may not be the means to reduce the number of your slaves?

M. Gr. Impossible!—Why, can't you discern that this flam of Sir James Elliot's is a mere fetch to favour his retreat.

M. God. And you never saw Wilding?

M. Gr. Never.

M. God. There is some mystery in this. I have, too, here in my hand another mortification that you must endure.

M. Gr. Of what kind?

M. God. A little allied to the last: it is from the military spark you met this morning.

M. Gr. What are the contents?

M. God. Only a formal declaration of love.

M. Gr. Why, you did not see him.

M. God. But it seems he did me.

M. Gr. Might I peruse it?——"Battles—no wounds so fatal—cannon-balls—Cupid—spring a mine—cruelty—die on a counterscarp—eyes—artillery—death—the stranger." It is addressed—to *you.*

M. God. I told you so.

M. Gr. You will pardon me, my dear; but I really cannot compliment you upon the supposition of a conquest at my expense.

M. God. That would be enough to make me vain. But why do you think it so impossible?

M. Gr. And do you positively want a reason?

M. God. Positively.

M. Gr. Why, then, I shall refer you for an answer to a faithful counsellor and most accomplished critic.

M. God. Who may that be?

M. Gr. The mirror upon your toilet.

M. God. Perhaps we may differ in judgement.

M. Gr. Why, can glasses flatter?

M. God. I can't say I think that necessary.

M. Gr. Saucy enough! — But come, child, don't let us quarrel upon so whimsical an occasion; time will explain the whole. You will favour me with your opinion of Young Wilding, at my window.

M. God. I attend you.

M. Gr. You will forgive me, my dear, the little hint I dropped, it was meant merely to serve you; for indeed, child, there is no quality so insufferable in a young woman as self-conceit and vanity.

M. God. You are most prodigiously obliging.

M. Gr. I'll follow you, miss. [*Exit Miss* GODFREY.] Pert thing!—She grows immoderately ugly. I always thought her awkward, but she is now an absolute fright.

M. God. [*within.*] Miss, Miss Grantam, your hero's at hand.

M. Gr. I come.

M. God. As I live, the very individual stranger.

M. Gr. No, sure!—Oh lord, let me have a peep.

M. God. It is he, it is he, it is he!

SCENE—the Street. OLD WILDING, YOUNG WILDING, *and* PAPILLON,

O. Wild. There, marquis, you must pardon me; for though Paris be more compact, yet surely London covers a much greater quantity.——Oh, Jack, look at that corner house; how d'ye like it?

Y. Wild. Very well: but I don't see any thing extraordinary.

O. Wild. I wish, though, you were the master of what it contains.

Y. Wild. What may that be, sir?

O. Wild. The mistress, you rogue, you a fine girl, and an immense fortune; aye, and a prudent sensible wench into the bargain.

Y. Wild. Time enough, yet, sir.

O. Wild. I don't see that: you are, lad, the last of our race, and I should be glad to see some probability of its continuance.

Y. Wild. Suppose, sir, you were to repeat your endeavours, you have cordially my consent.

O. Wild. No; rather too late in life for that experiment.

Y. Wild. Why, sir, would you recommend a *condition* to me that you disapprove of yourself?

O. Wild. Why, *sirrah,* I have done my duty to the public and my family, by producing you: now, sir, it is incumbent on you to discharge your debt.

Y. Wild. In the college cant, I shall beg leave to *tick* a little longer.

O. Wild. Why, then, to be serious, son, this is the very business I wanted to talk with you about. In a word, I wish you married; and by providing the lady of that mansion for the purpose, I have proved myself both a father and a friend.

Y. Wild. Far be it from me to question your

care; yet some preparation for so important a change——

O. Wild. Oh, I will allow you a week.

Y. Wild. A little more knowledge of the world.

O. Wild. That you may study at leisure.

Y. Wild. Now all Europe is in arms, my design was to serve my country abroad.

O. Wild. You will be full as useful to it by recruiting her subjects at home.

Y. Wild. You are, then, resolved.

O. Wild. Fixed.

Y. Wild. Positively?

O. Wild. Peremptorily.

Y. Wild. No prayers——

O. Wild. Can move me.

Y. Wild. How the deuce shall I get out of this toil? [*Aside.*] But suppose, sir, there should be an insurmountable objection?

O. Wild. Oh, leave the reconciling of that to me; I am an excellent casuist.

Y. Wild. But I say, sir, if it should be impossible to obey your commands?

O. Wild. Impossible!—I don't understand you.

Y. Wild. Oh, sir!—But, on my knees, first let me crave your pardon.

O. Wild. Pardon! for what?

Y. Wild. I fear I have lost all title to your future favour.

O. Wild. Which way?

Y. Wild. I have done a deed——

O. Wild. Let us hear it.

Y. Wild. At Abingdon, in the county of Berks.

O. Wild. Well?

Y. Wild. I am——

O. Wild. What?

Y. Wild. Already married.

O. Wild. Married!

Pap. Married!

Y. Wild. Married..

O. Wild. And without my consent?

Y. Wild. Compelled; fatally forced. Oh, sir, did you but know all the circumstances of my sad, sad story, your rage would soon convert itself to pity.

O. Wild. What an unlucky event!—But rise, and let me hear it all.

Y. Wild. The shame and confusion I now feel renders that task at present impossible: I must therefore rely for the relation on the good offices of this faithful friend.

Pap. Me, sir? I never heard one word of the matter.

O. Wild. Come, marquis, favour me with the particulars.

Pap. Upon my vard, sare, dis affair has so shock me, that I am almost as incapable to tell de tale as your son.—[*To* YOUNG WILDING.] Dry a your tears. What can I say?

Y. Wild. Any thing—*Oh!* [*Seems to weep.*]

Pap. You see, sare.—*Oh!*

O. Wild. Your kind concern at the misfortunes of my family calls for the most grateful acknowledgement.

Pap. Dis is great misfortunes, *sans doute.*

O. Wild. But if you, a stranger, are thus affected, what must a father feel?

Pap. Oh, *beaucoup*, great deal more.

O. Wild. But, since the evil is without a remedy, let us know the worst at once. Well, sir, at Abingdon.

Pap. Yes, at Abingdon.

O. Wild. In the county of Berks?

Pap. Dat is right, in de county of Berks.

Y. Wild. Oh, oh!

O. Wild. Ah, Jack, Jack! are all my hopes then——Though I dread to ask, yet it must be known; who is the girl, pray sir?

Pap. De girl, sir—[*Aside to* YOUNG WILDING.] Who shall I say?

Y. Wild. Any body.

Pap. For de girl, I can't say upon my vard.

O. Wild. Her condition?

Pap. *Pas grande* condition; dat is to be sure. But dere is no help.—[*Aside to* YOUNG WILDING.] sir, I am quite aground.

O. Wild. Yes; I read my shame in his reserve: some artful hussy!

Pap. Dat may be. Vat you call hussy?

O. Wild. Or, perhaps, some common creature! But I am prepared to hear the worst.

Pap. Have you no mercy?

Y. Wild. I'll step to your relief, sir.

Pap. O lord! a happy deliverance.

Y. Wild. Though it is almost death for me to speak, yet it would be infamous to let the reputation of the lady suffer by my silence: she is, sir, of an ancient house and unblemished character.

O. Wild. That is something.

Y. Wild. And though her fortune may not be equal to the warm wishes of a fond father, yet —

O. Wild. Her name?

Y. Wild. Miss Lydia Sybthorp.

O. Wild. Sybthorp.——I never heard of the name. But proceed.

Y. Wild. The latter end of last long vacation, I went, with Sir James Elliot, to pass a few days at a new purchase of his near Abingdon. There,

at an assembly, it was my chance to meet and dance with this lady.

O. Wild. Is she handsome?

Y. Wild. Oh, sir, more beautiful ——

O. Wild. Nay, no raptures; but go on.

Y. Wild. But to her beauty she adds politeness, affability, and discretion; unless she forfeited that character by fixing her affections on me.

O. Wild. Modestly observed.

Y. Wild. I was deterred from a public declaration of my passion, dreading the scantiness of her fortune would prove an objection to you. Some private interviews she permitted.

O. Wild. Was that so decent?—But, love and prudence, madness and reason.

Y. Wild. One fatal evening, the twentieth of September, if I mistake not, we were in a retired room, innocently exchanging mutual vows, when her father, whom we expected to sup abroad, came suddenly upon us. I had just time to conceal myself in a closet.

O. Wild. What, unobserved by him?

Y. Wild. Entirely. But, as my ill stars would have it, a cat, of whom my wife is vastly fond, had a few days before lodged a litter of kittens in the same place: I unhappily trod upon one of the brood; which so provoked the implacable mother, that she flew at me with the fury of a tiger.

O. Wild. I have observed those creatures very fierce in defence of their young.

Pap. I shall hate a cat as long as I live.

Y. Wild. The noise roused the old gentleman's attention: he opened the door, and there discovered your son.

Pap. Unlucky.

Y. Wild. I rushed to the door; but, fatally, my

foot slipt at the top of the stairs, and down I came tumbling to the bottom; the pistol in my hand went off by accident: this alarmed her three brothers in the parlour, who, with all their servants, rushed with united force upon me.

O. Wild. And so surprised you?

Y. Wild. No, sir; with my sword I for some time made a gallant defence, and should have inevitably escaped, but a raw-boned, over-grown, clumsy cook-wench, struck at my sword with a kitchen poker, broke it in two, and compelled me to surrender at discretion: the consequence of which is obvious enough.

O. Wild. Natural. The lady's reputation, your condition, her beauty, your love, all combined to make marriage an unavoidable measure.

Y. Wild. May I hope, then, you rather think me unfortunate than culpable?

O. Wild. Why, your situation is a sufficient excuse: all I blame you for, is your keeping it a secret from me. With Miss Grantam I shall make an awkward figure: but the best apology is the truth: I'll hasten and explain it to her all———Oh, Jack, Jack, this is a mortifying business.

Y. Wild. Most melancholy.

[*Exit* OLD WILDING.

Pap. I am amazed, sir, that you have so carefully concealed this transaction from me.

Y. Wild. Heyday! what do you believe it, too?

Pap. Believe it! Why is not the story of the marriage true?

Y. Wild. Not a syllable.

Pap. And the cat, and the pistol, and the poker?

Y. Wild. All invention. And were you really taken in?

Pap. Lord, sir, how was it possible to avoid it?

Mercy on us! what a collection of circumstances have you crowded together!

Y. Wild. Genius, the mere effects of genius, Papillon. But, to deceive you, who so thoroughly know me ——

Pap. But, to prevent that for the future, could you not just give your humble servant a hint, when you are bent upon *bouncing*? Besides, sir, if you recollect your fixed resolution to reform——

Y. Wild. Aye, as to matter of fancy, the mere sport and frolic of invention: but in case of necessity—why, Miss Godfrey was at stake, and I was forced to use all my finesse.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Two letters, sir. [*Exit.*

Pap. There are two things, in my conscience, my master will never want: a prompt lie, and a ready excuse for telling it.

Y. Wild. Hum! business begins to thicken upon us: a challenge from Sir James Elliot, and a rendezvous from the pretty Miss Godfrey. They shall both be observed, but in their proper order; therefore the lady first. Let me see—I have not been twenty hours in town, and I have already got a challenge, a mistress, and a wife; now, if I could but get engaged in a chancery suit, I should have my hands pretty full of employment. Come, Papillon, we have no time to be idle. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD

MISS GRANTAM *and* MISS GODFREY.

M. God. Upon my word, Miss Grantam, this is

but an idle piece of curiosity: you know the man is already disposed of, and therefore——

M. Gr. That is true, my dear; but there is in this affair some mystery, that I must and will have explained.

M. God. Come, come, I know the grievance. You can't brook that this spark, though even a married man, should throw off his allegiance to you, and enter a volunteer into my service.

M. Gr. And so, you take the fact for granted?

M. God. Have I not his letter?

M. Gr. Conceited creature!—I fancy, miss, by your vast affection for this letter, it is the first of the kind you ever received.

M. God. Nay, my dear, why should you be pipued at me? the fault is none of mine; I dropped no handkerchief; I threw out no lure: *the bird* came willingly to hand, you know.

M. Gr. [True, and] metaphorical, too! what, you are setting up for a wit as well as *a belle!* and really, madam, to do you justice, you have full as fine pretensions to one as the other.

M. God. I fancy, madam, the world will not form their judgement of either from the report of a disappointed rival.

M. Gr. Rival! admirably rallied!—But, let me tell you, madam, this sort of behaviour, madam, at your own house, whatever may be your beauty, is no great proof of your breeding, madam.

M. God. As to that, ma'am, I hope I shall always show a proper resentment to any insult that is offered me, let it be in whose house it may. The assignation, ma'am, both time and place, was of your own contriving.

M. Gr. Mighty well, ma'am

M. God. But if, dreading a mortification, you

think proper to alter your plan, your chair, I believe, is in waiting.

M. Gr. It is, madam! then let it wait.—Oh, what, that was your scheme! but it wo'n't take, miss: the contrivance is a little too shallow.

M. God. I don't understand you.

M. Gr. Cunning creature! So all this insolence was concerted, it seems: a plot to drive me out of the house, that you might have the fellow all to yourself: but I have a regard for your character, though you neglect it. Fie, miss! a passion for a married man! I really blush for you.

M. God. And I most sincerely pity you. But curb your choler a little: the inquiry you are about to make requires rather a cooler disposition of mind; and by this time the hero is at hand.

M. Gr. Mighty well; I am prepared. But, Miss Godfrey, if you really wish to be acquitted of all artificial underhand dealings, in this affair, suffer me in your name to manage the interview.

M. God. Most willingly. But he will recollect your voice.

M. Gr. Oh, that is easily altered. [*Enter a maid, who whispers Miss* GRANTAM, *and exit.*] It is he; but hide yourself, miss, if you please.

M. God. Your hood a little forwarder, miss: you may be known, and then we shall have the language of politeness inflamed to proofs of a violent passion.

M. Gr. You are prodigiously cautious.

Enter YOUNG WILDING.

Y. Wild. This rendezvous is something in the Spanish taste, imported, I suppose, with the guitar.*

* This instrument was newly introduced to this country, at the period of first representation—1776.

At present, I presume, the custom is confined to the great; but it will descend, and in a couple of months I shall not be surprised to hear an attorney's hackney clerk rousing, at midnight, a milliner's 'prentice, with an "Ally, Ally Croker." But that, if I mistake not, is the temple; and see my goddess herself. Miss Godfrey!

M. Gr. Hush.

Y. Wild. Am I right, miss?

M. Gr. Softly. You received my letter, I see, sir.

Y. Wild. And flew to the appointment with more——

M. Gr. No raptures, I beg. But you must not suppose this meeting meant to encourage your hopes.

Y. Wild. How, madam!

M. Gr. Oh, by no means, sir; for, though I own your figure is pleasing, and your coversation—

M. God. Hold, miss; when did I ever converse with him?

M. Gr. Why, did not you see him in the park?

M. God. True, madam; but the conversation was with you.

M. Gr. Bless me! you are very difficult. I say, sir, though your person may be unexceptionable, yet your character——

Y. Wild. My character!

M. Gr. Come, come, you are better known than you imagine.

Y. Wild. I hope not.

M. Gr. Your name is Wilding.

Y. Wild. How the deuce came she by that? True, madam.

M. Gr. Pray have you never heard of a Miss Grantam?

Y. Wild. Frequently.

M. Gr. You have. And, had you never any favourable thoughts of that lady? Now mind, miss.

Y. Wild. If you mean as a lover, never. The lady did me the honour to have a small design upon me.

M. God. I hear every word, miss.

M. Gr. But you need not lean so heavy upon me; he speaks loud enough to be heard.——— I have been told, sir, that——

Y. Wild. Yes, madam, and very likely by the lady herself.

M. Gr. Sir!

Y. Wild. Oh, madam, I have another obligation in my pocket to Miss Grantam, which must be discharged in the morning.

M. Gr. Of what kind?

Y. Wild. Why, the lady, finding an old humble servant of hers a little lethargic, has thought fit to administer me in a jealous draught, in order to quicken his passion.

M. Gr. Sir, let me tell you ——

M. God. Have a care; you will betray yourself.

Y. Wild. Oh, the whole story will afford you infinite diversion: such a farrago of sights and feasts. But, upon my honour, the girl has a fertile invention.

M. God. So! what, that story was yours was it?

Y. Wild. Pray, madam, don't I hear another voice?

M. Gr. A distant relation of mine.——Every syllable false.—But, sir, we have another charge against you. Do you know any thing of a lady at Abingdon?

Y. Wild. Miss Grantam again. Yes, madam, I have some knowledge of that lady.

M. Gr. You have! Well, sir, and that being the case, how could you have the assurance——

Y. Wild. A moment's patience, madam. That lady, that Berkshire lady, will, I can assure you, prove no bar to my hopes.

M. Gr. How, sir, *no bar?*

Y. Wild. Not in the least, madam: for that lady exists in idea only.

M. Gr. No such person.

Y. Wild. A mere creature of the imagination.

M. Gr. Indeed?

Y. Wild. The attacks of Miss Grantam were so powerfully enforced, too, by paternal authority, that I had no method of avoiding the blow, but by sheltering myself under the conjugal shield.

M. Gr. You are not married, then?———But what credit can I give to the professions of a man, who, in an article of such importance, and to a person of such respect ——

Y. Wild. Nay, madam, surely Miss Godfrey should not accuse me of a crime her own charms have occasioned. Could any other motive but the fear of losing her, prevail on me to trifle with a father, or compel me to infringe those laws which I have hitherto so unavoidably observed?

M. Gr. What laws, sir?

Y. Wild. The sacred laws of truth, madam.

M. Gr. There, indeed, you did yourself an infinite violence. But when the whole of the affair is discovered, will it be so easy to get rid of Miss Grantam? the violence of her passion, and the old gentleman's obstinacy ——

Y. Wild. Are nothing to a mind resolved.

M. Gr. Poor Miss Grantam!

Y. Wild. Do you know her, madam?

M. Gr. I have heard of her: but you, sir, I

suppose, have been long on an intimate footing?

Y. Wild. Bred up together from children.

M. Gr. Bravo!—Is she handsome?

Y. Wild. Her paint comes from Paris, and her *femme de chambre* is an excellent artist.

M. Gr. Very well!—Her shape?

Y. Wild. Pray, madam, is not *Curzon* esteemed the best stay-maker for people inclined to be crooked?

M. Gr. But, as to the qualities of her mind; for instance, her understanding?

Y. Mild. Uncultivated.

M. Gr. Her wit?

Y. Wild. Borrowed.

M. Gr Her taste?

Y. Wild. Trifling.

M. Gr. And her temper?

Y. Wild. Intolerable.

M. Gr. A finished picture. But come, these are not your real thoughts; this is a sacrifice you think due to the vanity of our sex.

Y. Wild. My honest sentiments: and, to convince you how thoroughly indifferent I am to that lady, I would, upon my veracity, as soon take a wife from the Grand Signior's seraglio.——Now, madam, I hope you are satisfied.

M. Gr. And you would not scruple to acknowledge this before the lady's face?

Y. Wild. The first opportunity.

M. Gr. That I will take care to provide you. Dare you meet me at her house?

Y. Wild. When?

M. Gr. In half an hour.

Y. Wild. But, wo'n't a declaration of this sort appear odd at——a——

M. Gr. Come, no evasion; your conduct and

character seem to me a little equivocal, and I must insist on this proof, at least of ——

Y. Wild. You shall have it.

M. Gr. In half an hour.

Y. Wild. This instant.

M. Gr. Be punctual.

Y. Wild. Or, may I forfeit your favour.

M. Gr. Very well: till then, sir, adieu.—— Now, I think, I have my spark in the toil; and if the fellow has any feeling, if I don't make him smart for every *particle*——Come, my dear, I shall stand in need of your aid. [*Exeunt.*

Y. Wild. So! I am now, I think, arrived at a critical period. If I can but weather this point ——But why should I doubt it? It is in the day of distress only that a great man displays his abilities. But I shall want Papillon: where can the puppy be?

Enter PAPILLON.

Y. Wild. So, sir, where have you been rambling?

Pap. I did not suppose you would want——

Y. Wild. Want!—you are always out of the way. Where have I been forced to tell forty lies upon my own credit, and not a single soul to vouch for the truth of them.

Pap. Lord, sir, you know ——

Y. Wild. Don't plague me with your apologies; but it is lucky for you that I want your assistance. Come with me to Miss Grantam's.

Pap. On what occasion?

Y. Wild. An important one: but I'll prepare you as we walk.

Pap. Sir, I am really——I could wish you would be so good as to ——

Y. Wild. What, desert your friend in the heat of battle! oh, you poltroon!

Pap. Sir, I would do any thing, but you know I have not talents.

Y. Wild. I do; and for my own sake shall not task them too high.

Pap. Now I suppose the hour is come when we shall pay for all.

Y. Wild. Why, what a dastardly, hen-hearted ——— but come, Papillon, this shall be your last campaign. Don't droop, man; confide in your leader, and remember, "*Sub auspice Teucro, nil desperandum.*" [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—A Room. Enter a SERVANT, *conducting in* OLD WILDING.

Ser. My lady, sir, will be at home immediately. Sir James Elliot is in the next room waiting her return.

O. Wild. Pray, honest friend, will you tell Sir James that I beg the favour of a word with him. [*Exit* SERVANT.] This unthinking boy! Half the purpose of my life has been to plan this scheme for his happiness, and in one heedless hour has he mangled all.

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir, I ask your pardon; but upon so interesting a subject, I know you will excuse my intrusion. Pray, sir, of what credit is the family of the *Sybthorps* in Berkshire?

Sir J. Sir!

O. Wild. I don't mean as to property; that I am not so solicitous about; but as to their character: do they live in reputation? Are they respected in the neighbourhood?

Sir J. The family of the *Sybthorps!*

O. Wild. Of the Sybthorps.

Sir J. Really, I don't know, sir.

O. Wild. Not *know!*

Sir J. No; it is the very first time I ever heard of the name.

O. Wild. How steadily he denies it! Well done, baronet! I find Jack's account was a just one. [*Aside.*] Pray, Sir James, recollect yourself.

Sir J. It would be to no purpose.

O. Wild. Come, sir, your motive for this affected ignorance is a generous, but unnecessary proof of your friendship for my son: but I know the whole affair.

Sir J. What affair?

O. Wild. Jack's marriage.

Sir J. What Jack?

O. Wild. My son Jack.

Sir J. Is he married?

O. Wild. Is he married! why, you know he is.

Sir J. Not I, upon my honour.

O. Wild. Nay, that is going a little too far: but to remove all your scruples at once, he has owned it himself.

Sir J. He has?

O. Wild. Aye, aye, to me. Every circumstance: going to your new purchase at Abingdon —meeting Lydia Sybthorp at the assembly—their private interviews—surprised by the father—pistol—poker—and marriage; in short, every particular.

Sir J. And this account you had from your son?

O. Wild. From Jack; not two hours ago.

Sir J. I wish you joy, sir.

O. Wild. Not much of that, I believe.

Sir J. Why, sir, does the marriage displease you?

O. Wild. Doubtless.

Sir J. Then I fancy you may make yourself easy.

O. Wild. Why so?

Sir J. You have got, sir, the most prudent daughter-in-law in the British dominions.

O. Wild. I am happy to hear it.

Sir J. For, although she may not have brought you much, I'm sure she'll not cost you a farthing.

O. Wild. Aye, exactly Jack's account.

Sir J. She'll be easily jointured.

O. Wild. Justice shall be done her.

Sir J. No provision necessary for younger children.

O. Wild. No, sir! why not?—I can tell you, if she answers your account, not the daughter of a duke——

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

O. Wild. You are merry, sir.

Sir J. What an unaccountable fellow!

O. Wild. Sir!

Sir J. I beg your pardon, sir. But with regard to this marriage—

O. Wild. Well, sir!

Sir J. I take the whole history to be neither more nor less than absolute *fable.*

O. Wild. How, sir!

Sir J. Even so.

O. Wild. Why, sir, do you think my son would dare to impose upon me?

Sir J. Sir, he would dare to impose upon any body. Don't I know him?

O. Wild. What do you know?

Sir J. I know, sir, that his narratives gain him

more applause than credit; and that, whether from constitution or habit, there is no believing a syllable he says.

O. Wild. Oh, mighty well, sir!—He wants to turn the tables upon Jack.—But it wo'n't do; you are forestalled; your novels wo'n't pass upon me.

Sir J. Sir!

O. Wild. Nor is the character of my son to be blasted with the breath of a bouncer.

Sir J. What is this?

O. Wild. No, no, *Mr. Mandeville,* it wo'n't do; you are as well known here as in your own county of Hereford.

Sir J. Mr. Wilding, but that I am sure this extravagant behaviour owes its rise to some impudent impositions of your son, your age would scarcely prove your protection.

O. Wild. Nor, sir, but that I know my boy equal to the defence of his own honour, should he want a protector in this arm, withered and impotent as you may think it.

Enter MISS GRANTAM.

M. Gr. Bless me, gentlemen, what is the meaning of this?

Sir J. No more, at present, sir: I have another demand upon your son; we'll settle the whole together.

O. Wild. I am sure he will do you justice.

M. Gr. How, Sir James Elliot! I flattered myself that you had finished your visits here, sir. Must I be the eternal object of your outrage? not only insulted in my own person, but in that of my friends! Pray, sir, what right———

O. Wild. Madam, I ask your pardon; a dis-

agreeable occasion brought me here? I come, madam, to renounce all hopes of being nearer allied to you, my son, unfortunately, being married already.

M. Gr. Married!

Sir J. Yes, madam, to a lady in the clouds; and because I have refused to acknowledge her family, this old gentleman has behaved in a manner very inconsistent with his usual politeness.

O. Wild. Sir, I thought this affair was to be reserved for another occasion; but you, it seems—

M. Gr. Oh, is that the business?—Why, I begin to be afraid that we are here a little in the wrong, Mr. Wilding.

O. Wild. Madam!

M. Gr. Your son has just confirmed Sir James Elliot's opinion, at a conference under Miss Godfrey's window.

O. Wild. Is it possible?

M. Gr. Most true; and assigned two most whimsical motives for the unaccountable tale.

O. Wild. What can they be?

M. Gr. An aversion for me, whom he has seen but once, and an affection for Miss Godfrey, whom I am almost sure he never saw in his life.

O. Wild. You amaze me.

M. Gr. Indeed, Mr. Wilding, your son is a most extraordinary youth, he has finely perplexed us all. I think, Sir James, you have a small obligation to him.

Sir J. Which I shall take care to acknowledge the first opportunity.

O. Wild. You have my consent. An abandoned profligate! was his father a proper subject for his —But I discard him.

M. Gr. Nay, now, gentlemen, you are rather

too warm: I can't think Mr. Wilding bad-hearted at the bottom. This is a levity——

O. Wild. How, madam! *a levity!*

M. Gr. Take my word for it, no more; inflamed into habit by the approbation of his juvenile friends. Will you submit his punishment to me? I think I have the means in my hands, both to satisfy your resentments, and accomplish his cure into the bargain.

Sir J. I have no quarrel with him, but for the ill offices he has done me with you.

M. Gr. D'ye hear, Mr. Wilding? I am afraid my opinion [coinciding] with Sir James's must cement the general peace.

O. Wild. Madam, I submit to any—

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Wilding, to wait upon you, madam. [*Exit.*

M. Gr. He is punctual, I find. Come, good folks, you must act under my direction. You, sir, will get from your son, by what means you think fit, the real truth of the Abingdon business. You must likewise seemingly consent to his marriage with Miss Godfrey, who, I shrewdly suspect, he has by some odd accident mistaken for me: the lady herself shall appear at your call. Come, Sir James, you will withdraw. I intend to produce another performer, who will want a little instruction. Kitty.

Enter KITTY.

Let John show Mr. Wilding in to his father; then come to my dressing-room: I have a short *scene* to give you to study. [*Exit* KITTY] The girl is lively, and, I warrant, will do her *character* justice.

Come, Sir James. Nay, no ceremony; we must be as busy as bees. [*Exeunt.*

O. Wild. This strange boy!—But I must command my temper.

Y. Wild. [*speaking as he enters.*] People to speak with me! See what they want, Papillon,—My father here! that's unlucky enough.

O. Wild. Ha, Jack! what brings you here?

Y. Wild. Why, I thought it my duty to wait upon Miss Grantam, in order to make her some apology for the late unfortunate——

O. Wild. Well now, that is prudently, as well as politely done.

Y. Wild. I am happy, sir, to meet with your approbation.

O. Wild. I have been thinking, Jack, about my daughter-in-law: as the affair is public, it is not decent to let her continue longer at her father's.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Would it not be right to send for her home?

Y. Wild. Doubtless, sir.

O. Wild. I think so. Why, then, to-morrow my chariot shall fetch her.

Y. Wild. The devil it shall! [*Aside.*] Not quite so soon, if you please, sir.

O. Wild. No! why not?

Y. Wild. The journey may be dangerous in her present condition.

O. Wild. What's the matter with her?

Y. Wild. She is big with child, sir.

O. Wild. An audacious——Big with child! that is unfortunate. But, however, an easy carriage and short stages cannot hurt her.

Y. Wild. Pardon me, sir, I dare not trust her: she is six months gone.

O. Wild. Nay, then, there may be danger indeed. But should not I write to her father, just to let him know that you have discovered [*disclosed*] the secret.

Y. Wild. By all means, sir, it will make him extremely happy.

O. Wild. Why, then, I will instantly about it. Pray how do you direct to him?

Y. Wild. Abingdon, Berkshire.

O. Wild. True, but his address?

Y. Wild. You need not trouble yourself, sir: I shall write by this post to my wife, and will send your letter enclosed.

O. Wild. Aye, aye, that will do. [*Going.*]

Y. Wild. So, I have parried that thrust.

O. Wild. Though, upon second thoughts, Jack, that will rather look too familiar for an introductory letter.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And these country gentlemen are full of punctilio——No, I'll send him a letter apart; so give me his direction.

Y. Wild. You have it, sir.

O. Wild. Ay, but his name: I have been so hurried that I have entirely forget it.

Y. Wild. I am sure so have I. [*Aside.*] His name—his name, sir—*Hopkins.*

O. Wild. Hopkins!

Y. Wild. Yes, sir.

O. Wild. That is not the same name that you gave me before: that, if I recollect, was either Sypthorp, or Sybthorp.

Y. Wild. You are right, sir; that is his paternal appellation; but the name of Hopkins he took for an estate of his mother's: so he is indiscriminately called Hopkins or Sybthorp; and, now I

recollect, I have his letter in my pocket—he signs himself *Sybthorp Hopkins.*

O. Wild. There is no end of this: I must stop him at once. Hark'ye, sir, I think you are called my son.

Y. Wild. I hope, sir, you have no reason to doubt it.

O. Wild. And look upon yourself as a gentleman?

Y. Wild. In having the honour of descending from you.

O. Wild. And that you think a sufficient pretension?

Y. Wild. Sir—pray sir—

O. Wild. And, by what means do you imagine your ancestors obtained that distinguishing title? By their pre-eminence in virtue, I suppose.

Y. Wild. Doubtless, sir.

O. Wild. And, has it never occurred to you, that what was gained by honour might be lost by infamy?

Y. Wild. Perfectly, sir.

O. Wild. Are you to learn what redress even the imputation of a lie demands, and that nothing less than the life of the adversary can extinguish the affront.

Y. Wild. Doubtless, sir.

O. Wild. Then, how dare you call yourself a gentleman! You, whose whole life has been one continued scene of fraud and falsity! And would nothing content you but making me a partner in your infamy? Not satisfied with violating that great band of society, mutual confidence, the most sacred rights of nature must be invaded, and your father made the innocent instrument to circulate your abominable impositions!

Y. Wild. But, sir!

O. Wild. Within this hour my life was near being sacrificed in defence of your fame. But, perhaps, that was your intention, and the story of your marriage merely calculated to send me out of the world, as a grateful return for my bringing you into it.

Y. Wild. For heaven's sake, sir!

O. Wild. What other motive?

Y. Wild. Hear me, I entreat you, sir—

O. Wild. To be again imposed on! no, Jack, my eyes are opened at last.

Y. Wild. By all that is sacred sir———

O. Wild. I am now deaf to your delusions.

Y. Wild. But hear me, sir. I own the Abingdon business——

O. Wild. An absolute fiction?

Y. Wild. I do.

O. Wild. And how dare you——

Y. Wild. I crave but a moment's audience.

O. Wild. Go on.

Y. Wild. Previous to the communication of your intention for me, I accidentally met with a lady whose charms——

O. Wild. So! What, here's another marriage trumped up; but that, too, is a stale device. And pray, sir, what place does this lady inhabit? Come, come, go on; you have a fertile invention, and this is a fine opportunity. Well, sir, and this charming lady, residing, I suppose, *in nubibus*——

Y. Wild. No, sir; in London.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Y. Wild. Nay, more, and at this instant in this house.

O. Wild. And her name——

Y. Wild. Godfrey.

O. Wild. The friend of Miss Grantam?

Y. Wild. The very same, sir.

O. Wild. Have you spoke to her?

Y. Wild. Parted from her not ten minutes ago; nay, am here by her appointment.

O. Wild. Has she favoured your addresses?

Y. Wild. Time, sir, and your approbation, will, I hope——

O. Wild. Look'ye, sir; as there is some little probability in this story, I shall think it worth farther inquiry. To be plain with you, I know Miss Godfrey; am intimate with her family: and though you deserve but little from me, I will endeavour to aid your intention. But, if in the progress of this affair, you practise any of your usual arts; if I discover the least falsehood, the least duplicity, remember, you have lost a father.

Y. Wild. I shall submit without a murmur.

[*Exit* OLD WILDING.

Enter PAPILLON.

Y. Wild. Well, Papillon.

Pap. Sir, here has been the devil to pay within.

Y. Wild. What's the matter?

Pap. A whole legion of cooks, confectioners, musicians, waiters, and watermen.

Y. Wild. What do they want?

Pap. You, sir.

Y. Wild. Me!

Pap. Yes, sir; they have brought in their bills.

Y. Wild. Bills! for what?

Pap. For the entertainment you gave last night upon the water.

Y. Wild. That *I* gave!

Pap. Yes, sir, you remember the bill of fare:

I am sure the very menti_n of it makes my mouth water.

Y. Wild. Pry'thee, are you mad? There must be some mistake; you know that I—

Pap. They have been vastly puzzled to find out your lodgings; but *Mr. Robinson* meeting, by accident, with Sir James Elliot, he was kind enough to tell him where you lived. Here are the bills: Almack's, twelve dozen of claret, ditto Champagne, Frontiniac, sweatmeats, pine-apples; the whole amount is £372: 9*s.* besides music and fireworks.

Y. Wild. Come, sir, this is no time for trifling.

Pap. Nay, sir, they say they have gone full as low as they can afford; and they were in hopes, from the great satisfaction you expressed to Sir James Elliot, that you would throw them in an additional compliment.

Y. Wild. Hark'ye, Mr. Papillon, if you don't cease your impertinence, I shall pay you a compliment that you would gladly excuse [the receipt of.]

Pap. Upon my faith, I relate but the mere matter of fact. You know, sir, I am but bad at invention; though this incident I cannot help thinking is the natural fruit of your happy one.

Y. Wild. But are you serious? is this possible?

Pap. Most certain. It was with difficulty I restrained their impatience; but, however, I have despatched them to your lodgings, with a promise that you shall immediately meet them.

Y. Wild. Oh, there we shall soon rid our hands of the troop.—Now, Papillon, I have news for you. My father has got to the bottom of the whole Abingdon business.

Pap. The deuce!

Y. Wild. We parted this moment. Such a scene!

Pap. And what was the issue?

Y. Wild. Happy, beyond my hopes; not only an *act of oblivion,* but a promise to plead my cause with the fair.

Pap. With Miss Godfrey?

Y. Wild. Who else?—He is now with her in another room.

Pap. And there is no—you understand me—in all this?

Y. Wild. No, no: that is all over, now—my reformation is fixed.

Pap. As a weather-cock.

Y. Wild. Here comes my father.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Well, sir, I find in this last article [of intelligence] you have condescended to tell me the truth: the young lady is not averse to your union [with her]; but in order to fix so mutable a mind, I have drawn up a slight contract, which you are both to sign.

Y. Wild. With transport.

O. Wild. I will introduce Miss Godfrey. [*Exit.*

Y. Wild. Did not I tell you, Papillon?

Pap. This is amazing, indeed.

Y. Wild. Am not I a happy, fortunate?—But they come.

Enter OLD WILDING *and Miss* GODFREY.

O. Wild. If, madam, he has not the highest sense of the great honour you do him, I shall cease to regard him.——There, sir, make your own acknowledgments to that lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. This is more than you merit; but let your future behaviour testify your gratitude.

Y. Wild. Papillon! Madam! Sir!

O. Wild. What, is the puppy petrified! Why don't you go up to the lady!

Y. Wild. Up to the lady!—That lady!

O. Wild. That lady!—To be sure. What other lady?—To Miss Godfrey!

Y. Wild. That lady Miss Godfrey!

O. Wild. What is all this?—Hark'ye, sir: I see what you are at: But no trifling; I'll be no more the dupe of your double, detestable—Recollect my last resolution: this instant your hand to the contract, or tremble at the consequence.

Y. Wild. Sir, that I hope is——might not I ——to be sure——

O. Wild. No further evasions! There, sir.

Y. Wild. Heigh ho. [*Signs it.*]

O. Wild. Very well. Now, madam, your name if you please.

Y. Wild. Papillon, do you know who she is?

Pap. That's a question indeed! Don't you, sir?

Y. Wild. Not I, as I hope to be saved.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. A young lady begs to speak with Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. With me!

M. God. A young lady with Mr. Wilding!

Ser. Seems distressed, madam, and extremely pressing for admittance.

M. God. Indeed! There may be something in this! You must permit me, sir, to pause a little: who knows but a prior claim may prevent—

O. Wild. How, sir, who is this lady?

Y. Wild. It is impossible for me to divine, sir.

O. Wild. You know nothing of her?

Y. Wild. How should I?

O. Wild. You hear, madam.

M. God. I presume your son can have no objection to the lady's appearance.

O. Wild. Not in the least, madam.

M. God. Show her in, John. *Exit.*

O. Wild. No, madam, I do not think there is the least room for suspecting him; he cannot be so abandoned as to——But she is here. Upon my word, *a sightly woman.*

Enter KITTY *as Miss* SYBTHORP.

Kitty. Where is he?—Oh, let me throw my arms——my life——my——

Y. Wild. Heyday! [*avoids her embraces.*

Kitty. And could you leave me? and for so long a space? Think how the tedious time has lagg'd along.

Y. Wild. Madam!

Kitty. But we are met at last, and now will part no more.

Y. Wild. The deuce we wo'n't!

Kitty. What, not one kind look, no tender word to hail our *second meeting!*

Y. Wild. What the devil is all this?

Kitty. Are all your oaths, your protestations, come to this? have I deserved such treatment? Quitted my father's house, left all my friends, and wandered here alone in search of thee, thou first, last, only object of my love.

O. Wild. To what can all this tend? Hark'ye, sir, unriddle this mystery.

Y. Wild. "*Davus, non Œdipus, sum.*" It is beyond me, I confess. Some lunatic escaped from her keeper, I suppose.

Kitty. Am I disowned then, contemned, slighted?

O. Wild. Hold; let me inquire into this matter a little. Pray, madam——You seem to be pretty familiar here—Do you know this gentleman?

Kitty. Too well.

O. Wild. His name?

Kitty. Wilding.

O. Wild. So far she is right. Now yours, if you please.

Kitty. Wilding!

Omnes. Wilding.

O. Wild. And how came you by that name, pray?

Kitty. Most lawfully, sir: by the sacred bond, the holy tie that made us one.

O. Wild. What, married to him!

Kitty. Most true.

Omnes. How!

Y. Wild. Sir, may I never —

O. Wild. Peace, monster!———One question more: your maiden name?

Kitty. Sybthorp.

O. Wild. Lydia, from Abingdon, in the county of Berks?

Kitty. The same.

O. Wild. As I suspected. So, then, the whole story is true, and the monster is married at last.

Y. Wild. Me, sir! But all that's ——

O. Wild. Eternal dumbness seize thee, measureless liar!

Y. Wild. If not me, hear this gentleman——— Marquis ———

Pap. Not I? I'll be drawn into none of your scrapes: it is a pit of your own digging, and so get out as well as you can. Meantime I'll shift for myself. [*Exit.*

O. Wild. What evasion now, monster?

M. God. Deceiver!

O. Wild. Liar!

M. God. Impostor!

Y. Wild. Why, this is a general combination to distract me; but I will be heard. Sir, you are grossly imposed upon: the low contriver of this woman's shallow artifice, I shall soon find means to discover; and as to you, madam, with whom I have been suddenly surprised into a contract, I most solemnly declare this is the first time I ever sat eyes on you.

O. Wild. Amazing confidence! Did not I bring her at your own request?

Y. Wild. No.

M. God. Is not this your own letter?

Y. Wild. No.

Kitty. Am not I your wife?

Y. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Did not you own it to me?

Y. Wild. Yes—that is—no, no.

Kitty. Hear me.

Y. Wild. No.

M. God. Answer me,

O. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Have not I ———

Y. Wild. No, no, no. Zounds you are all mad, and if I stay I shall catch the infection. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT *and* MISS GRANTAM.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

M. Gr. Finely performed.

O. Wild. You have kept your promise, and I thank you, madam.

M. Gr. My medicine was somewhat rough, sir; but in desperate cases, you know ———

O. Wild. If his cure is complete, he will gratefully acknowledge the cause; if not, the punishment comes far short of his crime. It is needless to pay you any compliments, Sir James; with that lady you cannot fail to be happy. I shall not venture to hint a scheme I have greatly at heart, until we have undeniable proofs of the success of our operations. To the ladies, indeed, no character is so dangerous as that of a liar.

They in the fairest fames can fix a flaw,
And vanquish females whom they never saw.

EPILOGUE,

BETWEEN

MISS GRANTAM and OLD WILDING.

By a Man of Fashion.

M. Gr. HOLD, sir,
Our plot concluded, and strict justice done,
Let me be heard as counsel for your son.
Acquit I can't, I mean to mitigate:
Proscribe all lying, what would be the fate
Of this and every other earthly state?
Consider, sir, if once you cry it down,
You'll shut up ev'ry coffee-house in town:
The tribe of politicians will want food;
Ev'n now half-famished—for the public good.
All Grub-street murderers of men and sense,
And every office of intelligence,
All would be bankrupts, the whole lying race,
And no gazette to publish their disgrace.

O. Wild. Too mild a sentence: must the good and great
Patriots be wronged, that booksellers may eat?

M. Gr. Your patience, sir; yet hear another word.
Turn to that hall where justice wields her sword:

Think in what narrow limits you would draw,
By this proscription, all the sons of law:
For, 'tis the fixed, determin'd rule of courts,
Vyner will tell you, nay, ev'n Coke's reports,
All pleaders may, when difficulties rise,
To gain one truth, expend a hundred lies.

O. Wild. To curb this practice I am somewhat loath;
A lawyer has no credit but on oath.

M. Gr. Then, to the softer sex some favour show:
Leave us possession of our modest—*no!*

O. Wild. Oh, freely, ma'am, we'll that allowance give,
So that two noes be held *affirmative.*
Provided ever, that your pish and fie,
On all occasions should be deem'd a lie.

M. Gr. Hard terms!
On this rejoinder, then, I rest my cause;
Should all pay homage to Truth's sacred laws,
Let us examine what would be the case:
Why many a great man would be out of place.

O. Wild. 'Twould many a virtuous character restore.

M. Gr. But take *a character* from many more.

O. Wild. Though on the side of bad the balance fall,
Better to find few good, than fear for all.

M. Gr. Strong are your reasons; yet, ere I submit,
I mean to take the voices of *the pit.*
Is it your pleasures that we make a rule,
That every liar be proclaimed a fool,
Fit subjects for our author's ridicule?

THE

ORATORS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

Where more is meant than meets the ear.

IL PENSEROSO.

REMARKS.

WHETHER the persons whose characters were *taken off* by Mr. Foote in this piece be or be not considered legitimate objects of satire, let us not stop here to inquire; but, that the spirit for lecturing and haranguing on matters of taste, which then predominated, and has recently broke out afresh, ought to be put down, none can deny, who rightly estimate the puppyism such a mode of teaching is calculated to engender. More people mount the rostrum, and attempt to lead away opinion than are capable of expressing their feelings intelligibly: genuine oratory may be acquired, caught, or learnt by practice, but cannot be *taught in ore rutundo*, though unfledged aspirants may in this manner learn to rub off their rusticity or provincialism. But when these latter turn *teachers* —Heaven bless their endeavours, and defend us from their inculcations!—The sight is too preposterous to be borne silently, for the sounds carry home their own condemnation in every sentence.

One of these, in the year 1762, was *delivering*

his oracles on "the Art of Elocution" and "the Art of Reading," Irish-English, whom Foote saw, with his usual perspicacity, required *correction.* This was Thomas Sheridan, the oldest arrival of that name from Ireland; and him did our satirist very happily imitate in style and manner, whilst the arch obliquity of recommending the *annual* importation of Irish and provincial teachers of *the art,* that we might possess a constant fresh supply of rare dialectics, was as highly relished by one part of the audience as it was pungently felt by the *objects* aimed at.

The Orators was first performed at the Haymarket-theatre in the summer of 1762, at the same hour at noon as Sheridan mounted his lecturing hobby, and drew off much of the teacher's audiences. But these had not been attended "with great success," as Sheridan's countryman, *William Cooke,* said of them, if by "success" we are to understand *benefit* to his hearers; for the fustian and froth of such attempts soon became visible, the teacher's chair failed to be regarded with respect by *the English,* and the numbers thinned at the repetition of each *course.* It was announced as "a Lecture on Oratory," of which, indeed, the first act is a fine burlesque, that is afterwards supported by examples *at the bar* and in *the house.* At its revival in 1767, and 1782, these parts received high plaudits, when neither the house or the bar stood very well in public estimation, for *the people* had been cajoled by both.

The long-winded introductory speech of Foote would, at the present day, prove tedious in the representation; and the grotesque casuistry of its periods, was we are given to understand, supported

by an affected mode of delivery. The character of Donald and his argumentative propensity is well managed, and includes an excellent rebuke of Scotch Orators and Oratory.

THE performers were named without the characters, both at its *coming out*, and at its revival, thus:—

	1762.	1767.
LECTURER	*Mr. Foote,*	*Mr. Foote.*
PUPILS	*Mr. Weston,*	*Mr. Weston,*
	Mr. M'George,	*Mr. Pyun,*
	Mr. Quin,	*Mr. Quick.*
	Mr. Bannister,	*Mr. Bannister.*
	Mr. Williams,	*Mr. Davis.*
	Mr. Young,	*Mr. Loveman.*
	Mr. Booth,	*Mr. Castle.*
	Mr. J. Palmer,	*Mr. J. Palmer.*
	Mr. Kickill,	*Mr. Strange.*
	Mr. Somers,	*Mr. Smith.*
	Mr. Pearce,	*Mr. Pearce.*
		Mr. Keen.
		Mr. Gardiner.
		Mr. Newton.
		Mr. Shuter.

CHARACTERS.

SCAMPER,
TIREHACK,
EPHRAIM SUDS,
DONALD M'GREGOR,
COUNSELLOR PROSEQUI,
JUSTICE,
SNUFFER.

SCENE—The Stage itself.

THE

ORATORS.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

Enter WILL TIREHACK *and* HARRY SCAMPER, *booted, with Whips in their Hands, into a Side-box.*

Scam. Pshaw! zounds! prithee, Will, let us go; what signifies our staying here?

Tire. Nay, but tarry a little; besides, you know we promised to give Poll Baylis and Bett Skinner the meeting.

Scam. No matter, we shall be sure to find them at three, at the Shakspeare.

Tire. But as we are here, Harry, let us know a little what it's about.

Scam. About! Why lectures, you fool! Have not you read the bills? and we have plenty of them at Oxford, you know!

Tire. Well, but for all that, there may be fun.

Scam. Why, then, stay and enjoy it yourself; and I'll step to the Bull and Gate, and call upon Jerry Lack-Latin and my horse. We shall see you at three. [*Rising.*

Tire. Nay, but, prithee, stay.

Scam. Rot me if I do. [*Going out of the box.*

Tire. Halloo, Harry; Harry—

Scam. Well, what's the matter now? [*Returning.*

Tire. Here's Poll Baylis just come into the gallery.

Scam. No——

Tire. She is, by —

Scam. Yes, faith! it is she, sure enough.—How goes it, Poll? [*Looking.*

Tire. Well, we shall have you now, I hope?

Scam. Ay, if I thought we should get any fun.

Tire. I'll make inquiry. Halloo! snuffers, snuffers.

Candle-snuffer. Your pleasure, sir?

Tire. What is all this business about here?

Snuff. Can't say, sir.

Scam. Well, but you could if you would let us into the secret.

Snuff. Not I, upon my honour!

Tire. Your honour, you son of a whore! D'ye hear, bid your master come hither, we want to ask him a question.

Snuff. I will— [*Exit.*

Tire. Scamper, will you ask him, or shall I?

Scam. Let me alone to him—

Enter FOOTE.

Tire. O'! here he is—

Foote. Your commands with me, gentlemen?

Scam. Why, you must know, Will and I here are upon a scheme from Oxford; and, because cash begins to run low—How much have you, Will?

Tire. Three-and-twenty shillings, besides the crown I paid at the door.

Scam. And I eighteen; now, as this will last

us but to-night, we are willing to husband our time; let us see, Will, how are we engaged?

Tire. Why, at three, with Bett and Poll, there, at the Shakspeare; after that to *the Coronation*;* for you know we have seen it but nine times—

Scam. And then back to the Shakspeare again; where we sup, and take horse at the door.

Tire. So, there's no time to be lost, you see; we desire, therefore, to know what sort of a thing this affair here of yours is? What, is it damn'd funny and comical?

Foote. Have you not seen the bills?

Scam. What, about the lectures? ay, but that's all *slang*,† I suppose; no, no—No tricks upon travellers; no, we know better—What, are there any more of you; or do you do it all yourself?

Foote. If I were in want of comedians [*performers*] you, gentlemen, are kind enough to lend me a lift; but, upon my word, my intentions, as the bill will inform you, are serious——

Tire. Are they? then I'll have my money again. What, do you think we come to London to *learn* any thing?—Come, Will. [*Going.*

Foote. Hold, gentlemen, I would detain you, if possible. What is it you expect?

Scam. To be jolly, and laugh, to be sure—

Foote. At what?

Tire. "At what!"—damn me, I don't know—at you, and your frolicks and fancies—

Foote. If that is all you desire, why, perhaps we shall not disappoint you.—

Scam. Sha'n't you?—why, that is an honest fellow—come, begin—

---

* A representation of that ceremony.

† *Slang* is used here for *deceptious* language.

Foote. But you will be so kind as not to interrupt me?

Scam. Never fear——

Foote. Ladies and gentlemen—

[SUDS *from the opposite box calls to* FOOTE, *and stops him short.*

Suds. Stop a minute; may I be permitted to speak?

Foote. Doubtless, sir—

Suds. Why the affair is this: my wife Alice—for you must know my name is Ephraim Suds, I am a soap-boiler in the city,—took it into her head, and nothing would serve her turn, but that I must be a common-council man this year; for says Alice, *says she*, It is the *onliest* way to rise in the world.

Foote. A just observation—you succeeded?

Suds. Oh! there was no danger of that—yes, yes, I got it all hollow; but now to come to the marrow of the business. Well, Alice, says I, to her, now I am chosen, what's next to be done? "Why now, says Alice, *says she*, thee must learn to make speeches; why, dost not see what purferment neighbour Grogram has got? Why man, 'tis all brought about by his *speechifying*. I tell thee what, Ephraim, if thee canst but once learn to lay down the law, there's no knowing to what thee mayst rise."——

Foote. Your lady had reason.

Suds. Why, I thought so too; and, as good luck would have it, who should come into the city, in the very nick of time, but master Professor along with his lectures—Adod, away in a hurry, Alice and I danced to Pewterers' Hall.*

* *Pewterers' Hall.* Our ancestors of civic celebrity

Foote. You improved, I hope?

Suds. O lud! It is unknown what knowledge we got; we can *read*—oh! we never stop to spell a word now—and then he told us such things about verbs, and nouns, and adverbs, that never entered our heads before, and emphasis and accent; heaven bless us! I did not think there had been such things in all the world.

Foote. And have you *speechified* yet?

Suds. Soft; soft and fair; we must walk before we can run—I think I have laid a pretty good foundation. The Mansion-house was not built in a day, Master Foote. But to go on with my tale; my dame one day looking over the papers, came running to me; now Ephraim, says she, thy business is done; rare news, lad; here is a man at the other end of the town, that will make thee a *speecher* at once, and out she pulled your proposals. Ah, Alice, says I, thee be'st but a fool, why I know that man, he is all upon his fun; *he* lecture—why, 'tis all [*nought*] but a *bam.*—Well, 'tis but seeing, says she, so, *wolens nolens*, she would have me come hither; now, if so be you be serious, I shall think my money wisely bestowed; but if it be only your comical works, I can tell you, you shall see me no more.

Foote. Sir, I should be extremely sorry to lose you; if I but knew what would content you.

Suds. Why, I want to be made an orator *on*; and to speak speeches, as I tell you, at our meetings, about politics, and peace, and ad-

---

fledged their first oratorical flights at some of those sixpenny assemblages which were held, from time to time, at the *Halls* of the minor city companies.

dresses, and the *new bridge*,* and all *them* kind of things.

Foote. Why, with your happy talents I should think much might be done.

Suds. I am proud to hear you say so. Indeed I am. I did *speechify* once at a vestry, concerning new lettering the church buckets, and came off 'cutely enough; and, to say the truth, that was the thing that provoked me to go to *Pewterers' Hall.*

[*Sits down again.*

Foote. Well, sir, I flatter myself, that in proportion to the difference of abilities in your two instructors, you will here make a tolerable progress. But, now, sir, with your favour, we will proceed to explain the nature of our design; and I hope, in the process, you, gentlemen, will find entertainment, and you, sir, information. [Mr. FOOTE *then proceeds in his lecture.*] My plan, gentlemen, is to be considered as a superstructure on that admirable foundation laid by the modern *professor of English*,† both our labours tending to the same general end; the perfectioning of our countrymen in a most essential article—the right use of their native language.

But what he has happily begun, I have the vanity to think I have as happily finished: he has, it is true, introduced you into the body of the church, but I conduct you into the choir of the cathedral: or, to explain myself by a more familiar allusion, though he is the *Poitier* who teaches

* New bridge. That at Blackfriars was then in contemplation.

† Sheridan was the professor of English oratory he intended to deride. See "Remarks," at page 136.

you the step and the grounds; yet I am the *Gallini** who gives you the air and the grace of the minuet.

His aim is propriety alone; mine propriety with elegance.

For, though reading—so shamefully neglected, not only by those of tender years, but the adult; not only by children, but even by grown men and women; not only in our private seminaries, but in our public universities—is allowed to be a necessary ingredient towards the formation of an orator; yet, a great many other rules, a great many other precepts, are requisite for him to attain perfection.

Nay, perhaps we might add—to support an argument without the danger of a defeat, (at least if we may trust observation,) that, of all the *professions* that require verbal intercourse with the public, there is none in which reading is of so little utility as in that of *oratory*.

I need not insist upon this head, as I believe every gentleman's experience will furnish him with instances of men eminent in oratory, who, from an early vivacity have neglected, or the indulgence of their parents have been emancipated from the attention and application necessary, it is true, to acquire this rugged art, but at the same time so ill-suited to their tender years, and so opposite to those innocent amusements in which children are known universally to delight. *Thwart not a child, lest you spoil his temper*,—is, or at least ought to be, an English proverb, as it is an universal practice.

I would not here be understood to depreciate

---

* Poitier, Gallini: two eminent dancers of that period.

the usefulness of reading, or to detract from the exceeding merit of *the Professor's* plan; no, my meaning is only just to drop a hint that I may occasionally use him as a walking-stick; a kind of an *elegantly clouded Mocoa*, or an *airy Anamaboo:* yet, that it is by no means my intention to depend upon him as *a support*, or lean upon him as *a crutch;* in a word, he will be rather ornamental than necessary to me.

But useless as his plan is to me, I sincerely wish it success, for the sake of the public; and, were my influence equal to my inclination, I would have a law enacted, upon the plan of the militia-bill, that, annually or biennially, draughts should be made from every parish of two, three, or more —as in that act of able-bodied, so in this of intelligent persons, who, at the expense of the several counties, should be sent to the capital, and there compelled to go through as many courses of the professor's lectures as he shall deem sufficient: thus, by those periodical rural detachments, the whole nation will, in a few years, be completely served, and a stock of learning laid in, that will last till time shall be no more.

Would our rulers but adopt this scheme! how superior would England be even to the most illustrious periods of Greece and Rome! what an unrivalled happiness for us, what an eternal fund of fame for them! Ye Solons, ye Lycurguses, ye Numas, hide your diminished heads! See what a revolution two laws in a few years have produced; see a whole people, sunk in more than Gothic ignorance, accustomed to no other iron implements than the pacific plough-share, or the harmless spade, start out at once profound scholars and veteran soldiers: if at this happy period, a

Frenchman, thinking any thing out of his own country worthy his attention, should condescend to pay this kingdom a visit; methinks, I anticipate the account he will give of us at his return, (like his countryman of old, who, at the taking of Rome, burst into the Capitol, and there finding the senate fixed and immoveable in their seats, he declared them an assembly of kings,) so will he at once pronounce the whole British nation to be an army of generals, and one congregation of doctors. Happy country! where *arma et toga* are so fortunately blended as to prevent all contention for pre-eminence.

I know but one objection which can be made to this plan, and that merely a temporary one—namely, that the culture of our lands would sustain infinite injury, if such a number of peasants were to deparochiate, there being already scarcely hands sufficient, from the recruits constantly made for Germany, &c. &c. &c. to carry on the common business of husbandry.

But what are riches? Perishable commodities, glittering, transitory, fallacious goods,* when compared to the substantial, incorruptible endowments of the mind! This truth is, indeed, happily inculcated by an old English adage;

> "When lands and goods are gone and spent,
> "Then learning is most excellent."

This sensible and poetical distich, I would recommend to Mr. Professor, as a motto for his intended treatise; but I suppose he is already well

* The "Perish commerce! live our independence!" of Mr. Windham, is here brought to our recollection.

provided with an apt *Latin*, if not a *Greek* one, to either of which I must yield the preference.

But to wave this ethical argument; I think I can easily foil the force of this objection, by a natural and obvious *succedaneum*. Suppose a clause was to be added to the bill for the importation of tallow, raw hides, and live cattle from Ireland, that, during this literary emigration, a sufficient number of inhabitants of that country may be transported hither to supply the vacancy: but here it must be observed, that for this purpose an act of parliament is indispensably necessary; for though it would be difficult, if not impossible, for us, in our present condition, to get in even our harvests without the aid of hands annually imported for that purpose from Ireland; yet this is at best but an illicit trade, and the men themselves are to be considered under the article of smuggled goods: a very heavy penalty being laid by statute on all masters of vessels, who shall venture to import any of the above-cited commodities into this realm, without special license. To this purpose I recollect a case in point, the fifth of William and Mary, Ban. Reg. The King contra Oflaarty. Vide V. Rep. vol. iii. chap. 9. page 4.

But if this should be thought by people in power too great an indulgence to the Irish—as we have never been remarkably profuse in our favours to our loyal and affectionate sister—I see no other method of redressing the imaginary evil, than by exempting from this service all the males till a general peace, and accepting, in their room, a suitable number of discreet middle-aged females: and these, when they have been properly perfected in the mysteries of our language, may be returned

to their several parishes, and there form little infantine communities of literati, which will be a stock for succeeding generations, [to breed from,] and, indeed, upon consideration, I don't know whether this wo'n't prove the best method for the introduction and universal propagation of the plan.

For the English common people, naturally sullen and obstinate, and religiously attached to their old customs, might be shocked and scandalized to see, at one bold stroke, the *fescues* and *fasces*, which have been, from time immemorial, consigned to one, or more, matron in every village, ravished at once from their hands, and delivered over to the administration of the opposite sex.

But to return to my own subject, from which my zeal for Mr. Professor's success has tempted me to make rather too long a digression.

When I ventured to affirm, that the profession of an orator might exist independently of an accurate knowledge of the arrangement, and different combinations of the four-and-twenty letters, so far as *(in the words of the Professor)* they relate to their being the arbitrary marks of meaning upon paper: yet, I would not be understood to assert this generally, as to every species of oratory, but to confine myself to those particular branches only, where the orator's own mind suggests the matter that his own mouth discharges. For instance, now, as when affairs of state are weighed at a common-council, religious points militated at the Robin-Hood,* the arts and sciences handled

* Robin-Hood.—A debating society, which had this denomination, assembled its numerous audiences in a court of the same name without Temple-bar, but subsequently in a large room, in Wych-street.

in the Strand, or politics debated near Westminster-abbey; here the arguments and words given are supposed to arise from the immediate impulse of the giver; but, where they are concurrent agents, as in the oratory peculiar to the pulpit and the stage, where one individual furnishes the matter, and another administers the manner, the case is widely different.

In the first instance, a tolerable proficiency in reading is indispensably requisite, as scarcely any memory but the late Mr. Heydegger's* could retain, to any degree of certainty, the various parts of the liturgy, the Old and New Testament, briefs, faculties, excommunications, &c. &c. and a lapse on those solemn occasions might be attended with very awkward circumstances. Nor would I here be supposed to insinuate, that the pieces of oratory delivered from the pulpit are not the composition of the deliverer; no—This is so far from being generally the case, that I have often heard complaints made against particular agents, that they have forced upon their congregations their own crude and insipid productions, when, at the same time, their native language would furnish them with so

* Heydegger. So in the printed copies; but this is evidently an error. He was a foreigner, of remarkably unfavourable features, and "director of amusements at the Pantheon." His name was held as a standing joke, as to personal appearance, but nothing was ever said about his memory or any other quality of the mind; in this respect he was *vanus*, so the mention of his name here must have been gross burlesque, or ironical, or mistakenly done. Probably, *Mr. Henderson* was meant; for he read the Liturgy, &c. in a style peculiarly fine, and successfully rivalled the fame of professor Sheridan himself.

extensive and noble a collection of admirable materials. But here the auditor, unless he be well read in theology, may be led into a mistake; for there are some men, who, by a particular happiness in their manner, have the address to make the works of other men so absolutely their own, that there is no distinguishing the difference; at this the poet hints in his *male dum recitas, &c.* For these various reasons, I think a warm application to the art of reading cannot be too strongly recommended to the professors of this kind of oratory.

With the regard to the *professors of the stage*, though reading is undoubtedly useful, yet, as the performer is to repeat, and not to read, the deficiency may be supplied by the introduction of a third agent, *viz.* a person to read to him till the words are rooted in his memory. This expedient, though tedious, I have known frequently practised with good success: little blunders will now and then unavoidably arise, either from the misapprehension of the second agent, or the ignorance or waggery of the third; but these slips generally pass unobserved, or, through inattention or indulgence, are overlooked by an indulgent audience. But to return to the consideration of my own plan, from which no temptation shall, for the future, seduce me to digress.

We will first, then, consider the utility of oratory.

Secondly, the distinct and various kinds, or species, of that science, as they are practised at this day in this kingdom.

Thirdly, we will demonstrate, that every branch of English oratory is peculiarly our own, owes its

rise, progress, and perfection to this country, and was not only unknown to the ancients, but is entirely repugnant to all those principles they have endeavoured to establish.

Fourthly, that any rhetorical system now existing, instead of a cross in the hands, with letters to direct you on your road, will prove only but a will-in-the-wisp, to confound, perplex, and bewilder you.

Fifthly, from hence will result a necessity for the immediate establishment of an academy, for the promulgation and inculcation of modern oratory.

To which academy, the author of these proposals does hope, sixthly, that he shall be appointed perpetual professor.

Perhaps it may not be impertinent here to observe, that the author has industriously avoided, and will, in the course of this treatise [*lecture*] avoid all poetical allusion, all grandeur of expression, all splendour of diction; [that he will] in short, renounce every rhetorical prop, as knowing that, on didactic subjects, order, simplicity, and perspicuity, are the means to gain his end, which is not to gratify the imagination, but to improve and polish the understanding of his countrymen.

First, then, we are to demonstrate the utility of oratory: and, this, we flatter ourselves, will, in a great measure, be evident from the consideration of its universality, and the distinctions it procures, both lucrative and honourable, to any man eminent in the art.

There is, by the constitution of this kingdom, an assembly of many individuals, who, as the seventh son of a seventh son is born a physician,

are orators by hereditary right;* that is, by birth they are enabled to give their opinions and sentiments on all subjects, where the interests of their country is concerned: to this we are to add another assembly, consisting of five hundred and fifty-eight individuals,† where, though the same privilege is enjoyed as in the first instance, yet this advantage is not possessed in virtue of any inherent natural right, but is obtained in consequence of an annual, triennial, or septennial deputation from the whole body of the people; if, then, we add to this list the number of all those candidates who are ambitious of this honour, with the infinite variety of changes that a revolution of twenty years will produce, we cannot estimate those funds of national orators in *esse*, *posse*, and *velle*, to a smaller quantity than 20,000; and this, I believe, by the disciples of De Moivre,‡ will be thought a very moderate computation.

The two orders of the long robe next demand our attention; and as the pre-eminence is unquestionably due to the priesthood, let us consider what number of persons is necessary to supply that service? England is divided into nine thousand nine hundred and thirteen parishes: now, if we suppose two pastors for every parish, this

---

* House of Lords.

† The House of Commons, but increased since our author's time to six hundred and fifty-eight members by the act of union with Ireland, 1800. By the way, "individuals" is but a meagre word for such bodies, especially a deliberative assembly.

‡ De Moivre wrote on Calculations; particularly on "the Doctrine of Chances."

learned body will be found to consist of nineteen thousand eight hundred and twenty-six individuals; but as the most sacred characters are no more exempted from that fatal stroke that puts a temporary period to our existence than the profane, it is necessary that a provision should be made of fit and able persons, so that at all events there be no lack of labourers in this plentiful vineyard: nor has the policy of this nation been so blinded as not to guard against this possible contingency, by erecting schools, seminaries, and universities, in which a convenient quantity of our youth are properly trained, in order to fill up chasms which may be ocasionally made by the insatiable sithe of death. If, then, we estimate this *corps de reserve* at the half only of the standing force, we shall find the army entire amount to twenty-nine thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine.

I foresee that an objection will be made to this calculation, viz. that two pastors to every parish is a most exorbitant and improbable charge; for that many parishes, from impropriations, appropriations, and other accidents, instead of two, are scarce able to support one pastor; and that this complaint is almost general throughout the whole principality of Wales, where many individuals of this respectable order, to the great damage of their dignity, are obliged to have recourse to very unclerical professions for the support of themselves and families.

This objection we will allow its full force; but then if it be considered that in our original estimate we omitted all deans, canons, prebends, heads and fellows of colleges, chaplains to ships, regiments, and private families, together with the

whole body of dissenting ministers of all denominations, field-preachers, and parish-clerks, I believe we shall be thought rather to have diminished than exaggerated the real quantity.

As I have not been able to get admittance to the archives of the several inns of court in this metropolis, I am afraid we shall not be able to determine, with the same degree of certainty, the exact number of those who have devoted their lives and labours to the explanation and due execution of our municipal laws: I am, therefore obliged to depend on circumstantial evidence, which, in some cases, is admitted, even in our courts, to have equal force with proof positive.

And here, the reason of the law (as the law is the perfection of reason) is extremely clear. To illustrate this by an instance:

A swears a robbery against *B*; *A* may lie, or at least be mistaken; but if the goods stolen from *A*, and previously described by him, are found, with their mark, in the possession of *B*, *B* not being able to account for such possession, that circumstance shall be deemed of at least equal weight against *B*, as if *A* were to swear positively to the personal identity of *B*. This being the practice of the courts, we shall proceed, with all possible expedition, (which, indeed, is not the practice of the courts,) to produce our proofs circumstantial. As in the former instance we have grounded our calculation on the number of parishes, we shall in this derive our computation from the number of houses in the kingdom.

To any man tolerably acquainted with the country of England, it is unnecessary to observe,

that not only in every town, but almost in every hamlet through which he travels, his eyes are constantly caught by the appearance of a smart house, prefaced with white rails, and prologued by a red door, with a brass knocker; when you desire to be acquainted with the name and quality of the owner of this mansion, you are always told that it belongs to lawyer such-a-one: now, if a hamlet containing thirty houses, with perhaps an environ of an equal number, where labour and the fruits of the earth are the only sources of wealth, can support one attorney in this rural magnificence; what an infinite number of lawyers can a commercial capital sustain? But, because I would rather retrench than exceed, I will only quarter one attorney upon fifty houses. The number of houses in the reign of George the First (since which time the quantity is considerably increased) was computed at 1,175,951. The number of attorneys then will be 23,518: and if we reckon one barrister to twenty attorneys, the sum total is 24,693.

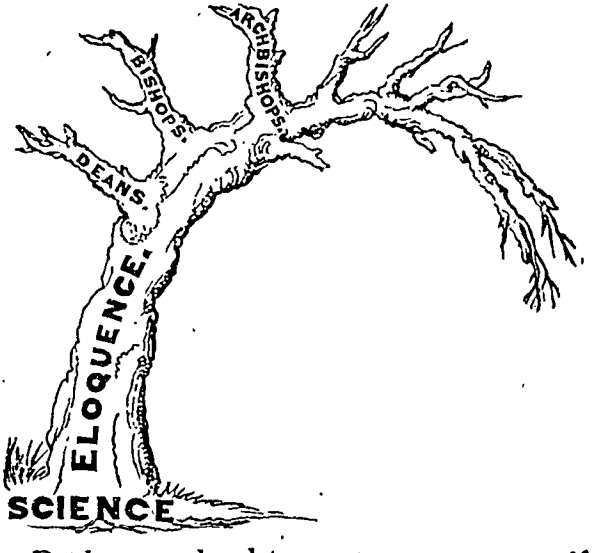
I know it will be here objected, that but one small part of this numerous body can be benefited by my plan, the privilege of speaking publicly being permitted to the superior order, the barristers only: but this criticism is confined to the observation of what passes merely in Westminster-hall, without considering that, at every quarter and petty session, at all county-courts, courts-leet, courts-baron, &c. &c. &c. full power of pleading is permited to every practitioner of the law.

As the number of those who incorporate themselves to promote, not only with their cash but their counsel, the progress of the arts and sciences,

is unlimited, it will be impossible for any fixed period to ascertain their quantity: nor can we, with any certainty, (as the Court-Register has been silent as to the members of common-council,) determine the amount of the city orators; besides, as what has been already offered is more than sufficient to prove the utility of our scheme from its universality, we shall not trouble *our readers* or ourselves with any further calculations; for, though they are replete with great depth of knowledge, are the result of intense application and the vehicles of mathematical truths, yet to the million the disquisition is but dry and tedious, and our purpose always was, and is, to mix with instruction a proper portion of delectation.

We will, therefore, for these reasons, hasten to the consideration of the second point proposed, viz. an inquiry into the various kinds of oratory now existing in this country. And we shall not, on this occasion, trouble ourselves with the investigation of all the smaller branches of this art; but, like the professors in anatomy, contenting ourselves with the dissection of the noble parts, remit the examination of the ignoble ones to the care of subaltern artists. Leaving, then, to the minute philosophers of the age all the orators of vestries, clubs, and coffee-houses, *Paulo majora canamus;* and for the better illustration of this head, permit me, reader, to be a little fanciful. We will suppose oratory to be one large tree, of which tree science is the *radix;* eloquence the trunk; from which trunk sprout four distinct ramifications; from which ramifications depends a fruit peculiar to each. But to make this clearer, we will present thee with the tree itself, not enig-

matically hieroglyphied, but plainly and palpably portrayed.



But here, reader, let me not arrogate to myself the merit of this happy explication; I own the hint was first given me with my grammar. The ingenious, profound Lilly, after he has led his pupils through the various, and almost impervious provinces of nouns, pronouns, verbs, participles, and adverbs, conducts them to the foot of that arduous and stupendous mountain "*Qui Mihi:*" here, dreading lest the youthful ardour [of his scholar] might be damped with the steep ascent, he reanimates his slackened nerves with the mystic picture of an apple-tree, the access to whose

boughs, though tedious and difficult, will yet be amply rewarded by leave to revel uncontrolled through the whole region of pippins. May the luscious fruit sprouting from the apex of each of my ramifications prove an equal spur to every beardless orator!

I know not whether the mentioning another order of orators, as they are not at present existing in *this kingdom*, may not be deemed an impropriety. But as I am a sincere lover of my country, I cannot help recommending an immediate importation of some of those useful and able artists. Sir William Temple, in his Essay on Poetry, has recorded their virtues; and as the race was not extinguished in his time, it is to be hoped that it still remains.

"In Ireland, (says Sir William,) the great men of their scepts, amongst many officers of their family, had not only a physician, a huntsman, a smith, and such like, but a poet and tale-teller.

"The first recorded and sung the actions of their ancestors, and entertained the company at feasts; the latter amused them with tales, when they were melancholy and could not sleep: and a very gallant gentleman has told me, of his own experience, that in his wolf-hunting there, when he used to be abroad in the mountains three or four days together, and lay very ill at nights, so as he could not well sleep, they would bring one of those tale-tellers, that when he lay down, would begin a story of a king, or a giant, a dwarf and a damsel, and continue all night long in such an even tone that you heard him going on whenever you awakened; and he believed nothing any physicians could give had so much and so in-

nocent an effect to make men sleep in any pains or distempers of body or mind." These are Sir William Temple's words, which contain an amazing instance of the power of those orators over the passions, it requiring full as much art and address to assuage and quell, as to blow up and excite, a tumult in the mind.

In a bill not long since depending in parliament, for the better regulating the city-watch, a clause was recommended, by a late respectable magistrate, that, to prevent the watchmen from sleeping at nights on bulks (the source of many disorders) the said watchmen should be compelled to sleep six hours in the day; an arch member seconded the motion, and begged to be included in this clause; for that, being grievously afflicted with the gout, he could not for many days sleep a single wink; now if he could be compelled to take a six hours' sleep every day, he apprehended that his fits would be of much shorter duration. Upon this dry comment, the motion was rashly rejected; but if the house had received the least intimation of the astonishing abilities of the Rockers, (for by that appellation I choose to distinguish this order of orators,) I am convinced that the above clause would not only have been received, but that proper encouragement would have been given, by parliament, for the introduction and establishment of this useful oratorical sect.

Nor, indeed, considering the vast addition to our customary cares, from the unaccountable fluctuation of our funds, the cause of concern to many thousand individuals, do I think a visit from a convenient quantity of those artists would be now out of season; but how this honour is to be obtained, whether any of these great men are now

residing amongst us, under the disguise of chairmen and hackney-coachmen; or whether it would not be more adviseable to employ those gentlemen who have so lately and successfully rummaged the Highlands of Scotland and Ireland for the remains of Runic poetry in search of the ablest professors —is submitted to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts.

I am aware that, on this occasion, some arch wag, possessed of the same spirit with the above senator, will object to my scheme of importation, by alleging, that we have of our own growth an ample provision of rockers, and refer us for proof to our several churches and chapels, during the hours of eleven and two on a Sunday, where the sleep-compelling power will be experimentally demonstrated to exist in its full force amongst us; but not to derogate from the abilities of my countrymen, surely the shortness of the time, the cause of the nap rarely continuing above fifteen or sixteen minutes, will not admit of a proper experiment: besides, how can one orator supply a whole parish, unless, indeed, our churches were to be converted into dormitories, which I can't think will happen, as this would be attended with inconveniences too obvious to need recital.

Abstracted from this last order, the English orators are to be divided into four distinct classes —the pulpit, the senate, the bar, and the stage; with the first of these branches, the pulpit, I shall not interfere, and, indeed, so few people of consequence and consideration frequent the churches now, that the art is scarcely worth cultivation. The bar ——

Scam. Pshaw! there's enough of this dull prosing; come, give us a little of something that's

funny; you talked about pupils. Could not we see them?

Foote. Rather too precipitate, sir; but, however, in some measure to satisfy you, and demonstrate the success of our scheme, give me leave to introduce to you a most extraordinary example in the person of a young Highlander. It is not altogether a year since this astonishing subject spoke nothing but Erse. Encouraged by the prodigies of my brother professor's skill, whose fame, like the Chevalier Taylor's,* pierces the remotest regions, his relations were tempted to send this young genius to Edinburgh; where he went through a regular course of the Professor's lectures, to finish his studies; he has been about six weeks under my care, and, considering the time, I think you will be amazed at his progress. Donald ——

Enter DONALD.

Don. What's your wull, sir?

Foote. Will you give these ladies and gentlemen a proof of your skill?

Don. Ah, ye wad ha'a specimen of my oratorical art.

Foote. If you please.

Don. In gude troth on ye sal; wol ye gi' me a topick?

Foote. O! choose for yourself.

Don. Its aw one to Donald.

---

* An impostor quack, who pretended to bear many orders of knighthood, who cajoled, robbed, and —— his patients, and rendered himself notorious by an affair with a Norfolk dowager, forging a certificate of his wife's decease in France; but his scheme of marriage being blown up by his own son in conjunction with the lady's heir at law, he was driven back to his his original nothingness, and died in the workhouse, at Hoxton.

Foote. What think you of a short penegyrick on the science we are treating of?

Don. On oratory; wi' aw my heart.

Foote. Mind your action; let that accompany your words ——

Don. Dunna heed, man—The topic I presum to haundle, is the miraculous gifts of an orator, wha, by the bare power of his words, he leads men, women, and bairns as he lists ——

Scam. And who?

Don. (Tartly.) Men, women, and bairns.

Scam. Bairns: who are they?

Foote. Oh! children——his meaning is obvious enough.

Don. Ay, ay; men, women, and bairns, whereever he lists: and first for the antiquity of the art —Ken ye', my lads, wha was the first orator?—Mayhap, ye think it was Tully the Latinist; ye are wide o'the mark; or Demosthenes the Greek. In gude troth, ye're as far off as before.—Wha was it, then? It was e'en that arch-chiel, the dee-vil himsel—

Scam. (Hastily.) The devil it was; how do you prove that?

Don. Guds zounds, mon, ye brake the thrid of my harang; and ye'll but ha'd your tongue, I'se prove it as plain as a pike-staff.

Tire. Be quiet, Will, and let him go on.

Don. I say it was that arch-chiel, the deevil himsel. Ye ken weel, my lads, how Adam and Eve were planted in Eden, wi pleuty o' bannocks and cail, and aw that they wished, but were prohibited the eating of pepins—

Scam. Apples—

Don. Weel, weel, and are na pepins and apples aw the same thing?

Foote. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hear him out. Go on with your pepins—

Don. Prohibited the eating of pepins; upon which what does me the orator Satan, but he whispers a saft speech in her lug; egad our grannum fell to in an instant, and eat a pepin without staying to pare it—[*Addresses himself to the Oxonians.*] Ken ye lads, wha was the first orator, now?

Tire. [*To* SCAMPER.] What say you to that?

Scam. By my soul, the fellow's right—

Don. Ay, but ye wan'na ha' patience—ye wan'na ha' patience, lads—

Tire. Hold your jaw, and go on—

Don. Now, we come to the definition of an orator; and it is from the Latin words *oro, orare,* to intreat, or perswad; and how, by the means o' elocution, or argument, which argument consists o' letters, which letters joined mak syllables, which syllables compounded mak words, which words combined mak sentences, or periods, or which aw together mak an orator, so the first gift of an orator is words—

Scam. Here, Donald, you are out.

Don. How so?

Scam. Words, the first gift of an orator! No. Donald, no, at school I learned better than that: Do'st not remember, Will, what is the first perfection of an orator? action. The second action. The third, action.

Tire. Right, right, Harry, as right as my nail; there, Donald, I think he has given you a dose—

Don. An ye stay me, i' the midst o' my argument—

Scam. Why don't you stick to truth?

Don. I tell ye, I can, *logically.*

Tire. Damn your logick—

Don. Mighty weel—Maister Foote, how ca'ye this usage?

Foote. Oh, never mind them—proceed.

Don. In gude troth, I'se not say ane ward mare.

Foote. Finish, finish, Donald—

Don. Ah! they have jumbled aw my ideas together; but an they will enter into a fair argumentation, I'se convince 'em that Donald Macgregor is mare than a match.—

Scam. You be—

Don. Very weel—

Foote. Nay, but my dear Donald—

Don. Hands aff, maister Foote—I ha' finished my tale; the de'el a word mare sal ye get out o' Donald—yer servant, sir. [*Exit.*

Foote. You see, gentlemen, what your impatience has lost us.

Scam. Rot him, let him go; but is this fellow one of your *pupils?* why, what a damnable twang he has got, with his men, women, and bairns!—

Foote. His pronunciation is, I own, a little irregular; but then consider, he is but merely a novice; why, even in his present condition, he makes no bad figure for his five minutes at the *Robin-Hood*; and in a month or two, we sha'n't be ashamed to start him in a more *respectable place.*

But now, gentlemen, we are to descend to the peculiar essential qualities of each distinct species of oratory; and first for the bar—but as no didactic rules can so well convey, or words make a proper impression, we will have recourse to more palpable means, and endeavour, by a lively imitation, to demonstrate the extent of our art. We

must, for this end, employ the aid of our pupils; but as some preparation is necessary, we hope you will indulge us in a short interruption.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE—A Hall of Justice.

Enter FOOTE.

The first species of oratory we are to demonstrate our skill in, is that of the bar; and, in order to give our lecture an air of reality, you are to suppose this a court of justice, furnished with proper ministers to discharge the necessary functions. But, to supply these gentlemen with business, we must likewise institute an imaginary cause: and, that the whole may be ideal, let it be the prosecution of an imaginary being; I mean the phantom of Cock-lane, a phænomenon that has much puzzled the brains, and terrified the minds, of many of our fellow-subjects.

You are to consider, ladies and gentlemen, that the language of the bar is a species of oratory distinct from every other. It has been observed, that the ornaments of this profession have not shone with equal lustre in an assembly near their own hall; the reason assigned, though a pleasant, is not the true *one*. It has been hinted, that these gentlemen were in want of their briefs; but were that the disease, the remedy would be easy enough: they need only have recourse to the *artifice* successfully practised by some of their colleagues; instead of having their briefs in their hands, to hide them at the bottom of their hats.

[*Calls to his pupils, who enter dressed as a justice, a clerk, a serjeant-at-law, and a counsellor.*]

You will remember, gentlemen, your proper pauses, repetitions, hums, ha's, and interjections; now seat yourselves, and you, the counsel, remember to be mighty dull, and you, the justice, to fall asleep. I must prepare to appear in this cause as a witness. [*Exit.*

Just. Clerk, read the indictment.

Clerk [*reads*]. Middlesex, to wit. Fanny Phantom, you are indicted, That, on or before the 1st day of January, 1762, you, the said Fanny, did, in a certain house, in a certain street, called Cock-lane, in the county of Middlesex, maliciously, treacherously, wickedly, and wilfully, by certain thumpings, knockings, scratchings, and flutterings, against doors, walls, wainscots, bedsteads, and bed-posts, disturb, annoy, assault, and terrify divers innocent, inoffensive, harmless, quiet, simple people, residing in, at, near, or about the said Cock-lane, and elsewhere, in the said county of Middlesex,* to the great prejudice of said people in said county. How say you, guilty, or—

Counsel. [*stops the Clerk short.*] May it please your worship—hem—I am counsel in this cause for the ghost—hem—and before I can permit her to plead, I have an objection to make, that is—hem—I shall object to her pleading at all.—Hem.—It is the standing law of this country—hem—

* Accuracy, though not requisite in this case, is ever desirable: Cock-lane is not in the *county of Middlesex*, but in London proper: it is situate near St. Sepulchre's Church, and the particular house where this farce was played off is a few doors from Snow-hill on the left hand, going westward—long since inhabited by Giacchini, the figure in *plaister designer.*

and has—hem—always been so allowed, deemed, and practised, that—hem—all criminals should be tried, *per pares*, by their equals—hem—that is—hem—by a jury of equal rank with themselves. Now, if this be the case, as the case it is, I—hem—I should be glad to know, how my client can be tried in this here manner. And first, who is my client? She is in the indictment called a phantom, a ghost. What is a ghost? A spirit. What is a spirit? A spirit is a thing that exists independently of, and is superior to, flesh and blood. And, can any man go for to think, that I can advise my client to submit to be tried by people of an inferior rank to herself? Certainly not—I therefore humbly move to quash this indictment, unless a jury of ghosts be first had and obtained. [*Sits down.*

Serj. I am in this cause counsel against Fanny Phantom, the ghost;—eh—and, notwithstanding the rule laid down by Mr. Prosequi, be—eh—right in the main, yet here it can't avail his client a whit. We allow—eh—we do allow, please your worship, that Fanny *quoad* Phantom—eh—had originally a right to a jury of ghosts; but—eh—if she did, by any act of her own, forfeit this right, her plea cannot be admitted. Now, we can prove, please your worship, prove by a cloud of witnesses, that said Fanny did, as specified in the indictment, scratch, knock, and flutter—eh—which said scratchings, knockings, and flutterings—eh—being operations merely peculiar to flesh, blood, and body—eh—we do humbly apprehend—eh—that, by condescending to execute the aforesaid operations, she has waved her privilege as a ghost, and may be tried in the ordinary form, according to the statute so made and provided in the reign of, &c. &c.

Your worship's opinion.

Tire. Smoke the justice, he is as fast as a church.

Scam. I fancy he has touched the tankard too much this morning; he'll know a good deal of what they have been saying.

Just. [*is waked by the Clerk, who tells him they have pleaded.*] Why, the objection—oh—brought by Mr. Prosequi is *(whispers the Clerk)*, doubtless, provisionally a valid objection; but then, if the culprit has, by an act of her own, defeated her privilege, as asserted in Mr. Serjeant's replication, we conceive she may be legally tried—oh—besides—oh—besides, I, I, I, can't well see how we could impannel a jury of ghosts, or—oh—how twelve *spirits*, who have no body at all, can be said to take a *corporal* oath, as required by law—unless, indeed, as in case of the peerage, the prisoner may be tried on their honour.

Coun. Your worship's distinction is just; knockings, scratchings, &c. as asserted by Mr. Serjeant—

Serj. Asserted—sir, do you doubt my instructions?

Coun. No interruption, if you please, Mr. Serjeant; I say *as asserted*, but can assertions be admitted as proofs? certainly not—

Serj. Our evidence is ready—

Coun. To that we object, to that we object, as it will anticipate the merits—your worship—

Serj. Your worship—

Jus. Why, as you impeach the ghost's privilege, you must produce proofs of her scratchings.

Serj. Call Shadrach Bodkin.

Clerk. Shadrach Bodkin, come into court.

Enter BODKIN.

Serj. Pray, Mr. Bodkin, where do you live?

Bod. I sojourn in Lukener's Lane.

Serj. What is your profession?

Bod. I am a *teacher* of the *word* and a *tailor*.

Scam. Zounds, Will, it is a methodist.

Tire. No, sure!

Scam. By the lord Harry, it is.

Clerk. Silence.

Serj. Do you know any thing of Fanny the phantom?

Bod. Yea; I do.

Serj. Can you give any account of her thumpings, scratchings, and flutterings?

Bod. Yea; manifold have been the scratchings and knockings that I have heard.

Serj. Name the times.

Bod. I have attended the spirit *Fanny* from the first day of her flutterings, even to the last scratch that she gave.

Serj. How long may that be?

Bod. Five weeks did she flutter, and six weeks did she scratch.

Scam. Six weeks—Damn it, I wonder she did not wear out her nails.

Clerk. Silence.

Serj. I hope the court is convinced.

Coun. Hold, Master Bodkin, you and I must have a little discourse. A tailor, you say. Do you work at your business?

Bod. No—

Coun. Look upon me, look upon the court—Then your present trade is teaching?

Bod. It is no trade.

Coun. What is it then, a calling?

Bod. No, it is no calling—it is rather—as I may say—a *forcing*—a *compelling*—

Coun. By whom?

Bod. By the spirit that is within me—

Scam. It is an evil spirit, I believe; and needs must when the devil drives, you know, Will.

Tire. Right, Harry—

Coun. When did you first feel these spiritual motions?

Bod. In the town of Norwich, where I was born.—One day, as I was sitting cross-legged on my shop board, new seating a cloth pair of breeches of Mr. Alderman Crape's—I felt the spirit within me, moving upwards and downwards, and this way and that way, and tumbling and jumbling—at first I thought it was the colic—

Coun. And how are you certain it was not?

Bod. At last I heard a voice whispering within me, crying, Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach, cast away the things that belong to thee, thy thimble and shears, and do the things that I bid thee.

Coun. And you did?

Bod. Yea, verily.

Coun. I think I have heard a little of you, master Bodkin; and so you quitted your business, your wife, and your children?

Bod. I did.

Coun. You did—But then you communed with other men's wives?

Bod. Yea, and with widows, and with maidens.

Coun. How came that about, Shadrach?

Bod. I was moved thereunto by the spirit.

Coun. I should rather think by the flesh—I have been told, friend Bodkin, that twelve became pregnant—

Bod. Thou art deceived—They were barely but nine.

Coun. Why, this was an active spirit.

Serj. But to the point, Mr. Prosequi.

Coun. Well, then—you say you have heard those scratchings and knockings?

Bod. Yea—

Coun. But why did you think they came from a spirit?

Bod. Because the very same thumps, scratches, and knocks, I have felt on my breast-bone from the spirit within me—

Coun. And these noises you are sure you heard on the first day of January?

Bod. Certain—

Serj. But to what do all those interrogatories tend?

Coun. To a most material purpose: your worship observes, that Bodkin is positive as to the noises made on the first day of January by Fanny the Phantom; now, if we can prove an *alibi*, that is, that, on that very day, at that very time, the said Fanny was scratching and fluttering any where else, we apprehend that we destroy the credit of this witness.—Call Peter Paragraph.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Coun. This gentleman is an eminent printer, and has collected, for public information, every particular relative to this remarkable story; but as he has the misfortune to have but one leg, your worship will indulge him in the use of a chair.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Enter PARAGRAPH.

Coun. Pray, Mr. Paragraph, where was you born?

Par. Sir, I am a native of Ireland, and born and bred in the city of Dublin.

Coun. When did you arrive in the city of London?

Par. About the last *autumnal equinox;* and now I recollect, my *Journal* makes mention of my departure for England, in the Besborough packet, Friday, October the tenth, N.S. or New Stile.

Coun. Oh! Then the Journal is yours?

Par. Please your worship, it is; and, relating thereto, I believe I can give you a pleasant conceit.—Last week I went to visit a *peer,* for I know *peers,* and *peers* know me. Quoth his lordship to me, Mr. Paragraph, with respect to your Journal, I would wish that your paper was whiter, or your ink blacker. Quoth I to the peer, by way of *reply,* I hope you will own there is enough for the money; his lordship was pleased to laugh. It was such a pretty repartee, he, he, he, he—

Jus. Pray, Mr. Paragraph, what might be your business in England?

Par. Hem—a little love affair, please your worship.

Coun. A wife, I suppose—

Par. Something tending that way; even so long ago as January, 1739-40, there past some amorous glances between us: she is the daughter of old Vamp of the Turnstile; but at that time I stifled my passion, Mrs. Paragraph being then in the land of the living.

Coun. She is now dead?

Par. Three years and three quarters, please your worship: we were exceeding happy together: she was, indeed, a little apt to be jealous.

Coun. No wonder—

Par. Yes: they can't help it, poor souls; but,

notwithstanding, at her death, I gave her a prodigious good character in my Journal.

Coun. And how proceeds the present affair?

Par. Just now, we are quite at a stand—

Coun. How so?

Par. The old scoundrel, her father, has played me a slippery trick.

Coun. Indeed!

Par. As he could give no money in hand, I agreed to take her *fortune* in *copies* [*copy-right*]; I was to have the Wit's *Vade Mecum* entire; four hundred of News from the Invisible World, in sheets; all that remained of Glanvil upon Witches; Hill's Bees, Bardana [on] Brewing and *Balsam of Honey*; and three-eighths of Robinson Crusoe.*

Coun. A pretty fortune!

Par. Yes; they are things that stir in the trade; but you must know that we agreed to go halves in Fanny the Phantom. But whilst I and two authors, whom I had hired to ask questions at nine shillings a night, were taking notes of the knockings at the house of Mr. Parsons himself, that old rascal Vamp had privately printed off a thousand eighteen-penny scratchings, purchased of two methodist preachers, at the public-house over the way—

Coun. Now we come to the point—look upon this evidence; was *he* present at Mr. Parsons's knockings?

Par. Never; this is one of the rascally Metho-

* The *technicals* are here a little confused; but nothing is more common (out of the trade) than to confound *copies* for *copy-right*. *Balsam of Honey* and some other quack Medicines were vended by a bookseller (Newbery), who thereupon up bookselling.

dists—Harkee, fellow, how could you be such a scoundrel to sell for genuine your counterfeit scratchings to Vamp?

Bod. My scratchings were the true scratchings—

Par. Why, you lying son of a whore, did not I buy all my materials from the girl's father himself?

Bod. What the spirit commanded, that did I.

Par. What spirit?

Bod. The spirit within me—

Par. If I could but get at you, I would soon try what sort of a spirit it is—stop, you villain.

[*Exit* BODKIN.

The rogue has made his escape—but I will dog him, to find out his haunts, and then return for a warrant.—His scratchings! a scoundrel; I will have justice, or I'll turn his tabernacle into a pigstye. [*Exit* PARAGRAPH.

Coun. I hope, please your worship, we have sufficiently established our *alibi*.

Jus. You are unquestionably entitled to a jury of ghosts.

Coun. Mr. Serjeant, you will provide us a list?

Serj. Let us see—you have no objection to Sir George Villars; the evil genius of Brutus; the ghost of Banquo; Mrs. Veal.

Coun. We object to a woman—your worship—

Jus. Why, it is not the practice; this, it must be owned, is an extraordinary case. But, however, if, on conviction, the Phantom should plead pregnancy, Mrs. Veal will be admitted on the jury of matrons.

Serj. I thank your worship: then the court is adjourned.

[TERENCE *and* DERMOT *in an upper box.*

Ter. By my shoul, but I will spake.

Der. Arrah, be quiet, Terence.

Ter. Dibble burn me, but I will; hut, hut, not spake, what should ail me? harkee you, Mr. Justice—

Scam. Hollo, what's the matter now, Will?

Der. Leave off, honey Terence, now you are well—

Ter. Dermot, be easy—

Scam. Hear him—

Tire. Hear him—

Ter. Ay, hear him, hear him; why the matter is this, Mr. Justice, that little hopping fellow, there, that Dublin Journal man, is as great a liar as ever was born—

Tire. How so?

Ter. Ay, prithee don't bodder me; what, d'ye learn no more manners at Oxford college, than to stop a jontleman in the midst of his speech before he begins? oh, for shame of yourself—Why the matter is this, Mr. Justice, that there what the dibble d'ye call him, Pra-Praragraf, but, by my shoul, that is none of his name neither, I know the little bastard as well as myself: as to Fanny the Phantom, long life to the poor gentlewoman, he knows no more of her than the mother that bore her—

Suds. Indeed! good lord, you surprise me?

Ter. Arrah, now, honey Suds, spake when you are spoke to; you ar'n't upon the jury, my jewel, now; by my shoul you are a little too fat for a ghost.

Tire. Prithee, friend Ephraim, let him go on; let's hear a little what he would be at—

Ter. I say, he knows nothing about the case that is litigated here, d'ye see, at all, at all; be-

cause why, I ha'n't ha been from Dublin above four weeks, or a month; and I saw him in his shop every day; so that how could he be here and there too; unless, indeed, he used to fly backwards and forwards, and that you see is impossible, becase why, he has got a wooden leg.

Scam. What the devil is the fellow about?

Tire. I smoke him—harkee, Terence, who do you take that lame man to be?

Ter. Oh, my jewel, I know him well enough sure by his parson, for all he thought to conceal himself by changing his name—

Scam. Why, it is Foote, you fool.

Ter. Arrah, who?

Tire. Foote.

Ter. Fot, what, the lecture-man? Pa—

Tire. Yes.

Ter. Arrah, be easy, honey—

Scam. Nay, inquire of Suds.

Suds. Truly I am minded 'twas he.

Ter. Your humble servant yourself, Mr. Suds; by my shoul, I'll wager you three thirteens to a rap, that it is no such matter at all, at all.

Scam. Done—and be judged by the company.

Ter. Done—I'll ask the orator himself—here he comes; [*Enter* FOOTE.] Harkee, honey Fot, was it yourself that was happing about here but now?

Foote. I have heard your debate, and must give judgement against you—

Ter. What, yourself, yourself!

Foote. It was—

Ter. Then, faith, I have lost my thirteens—Arrah, but Fot, my jewel, why are you after playing such pranks to bring an honest jontleman into company where he is nat——But what, is this selling of lectures a thriving profession?

Foote. I cannot determine as yet; the public have been very indulgent; I have not long opened.

Ter. By my shoul, if it answers, will you be my pupil, and *learn* me the trade?

Foote. Willingly—

Ter. That's an honest fellow, long life to you, lad. [*Sits down.*

Enter M'GEORGE.

M'George. Here is Docter Friscano without.

Foote. Friscano—who is he?

M'George. The German physician from James-street.

Foote. Well; what is his business with me?

M'George. He is in danger of losing his trade.

Foote. How so?

M'George. He says, last summer, things went on glibly enough, for then he had *the market** all to himself; but this year there is an Italian fellow started up in *the garden*, that with his face and grimace has taken all his patients away.

Foote. That's hard.

M'George. Dreadful—if you were to hear the poor man's terrible tale you would really be moved to compassion: he says that his bleeding won't find him in bread; and as to the tooth trade, excepting two stumps, for six-pence a piece, 'tis a month since he looked in a mouth—

Foote. How can I help him?

M'George. Why he thinks oratory will do all with the English; and if you would but teach him to talk, he should soon get his custom again—

Foote. Can he read?

* Covent-garden market, in which James-street is situate.

M'George. Oh Lord! poor man, no.

Foote. Well, let him attend here on—

M'George. He hopes you will quickly despatch him, for if he finds he can't do as *a doctor*, he intends to return to the curing of horses again.

Foote. Well, tell him he may rest assured, he shall either bleed or shoe in a fortnight.

[*Exit* M'GEORGE.

Foote. Having thus completed our lecture on the eloquence peculiar to the bar, we shall produce one great group of orators, in which will be exhibited specimens of every branch of the art. You will have, at one view, the choleric, the placid, the voluble, the frigid, the frothy, the turgid, the calm, and the clamorous; and, as a proof of our exquisite skill, our subjects are not such as a regular education has prepared for the reception of this sublime science, but a set of illiterate mechanics, whom you are to suppose assembled at the Robin-Hood, in Butcher-row,* in order to discuss and adjust the various systems of Europe; but particularly to determine the separate interest of their own mother country.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE—The Robin-Hood.

The PRESIDENT.

DERMOT O'DROHEDA, *a Chairman;* TIM TWIST,

---

* *Butcher-row* was situate outside Temple-bar, on the right, aslantways; where are still to be seen the remains of Robin-Hood court, in which this famous club was held, but subsequently removed to Wych-street.

a Tailor; STRAP, *a Shoemaker;* ANVIL, *a Smith;* SAM SLAUGHTER, *a Butcher;* CATCHPOLE, *a Bailiff. All with pewter pots before them.*

Pres. Silence, gentlemen; are your pots replenished with porter?

All. Full, Mr. President.

Pres. We will then proceed to the business of the day; and let me beg, gentlemen, that you will, in your debates, preserve that decency and decorum that is due to the importance of your deliberations, and the dignity of this illustrious assembly—

[*Gets up, pulls off his hat, and reads the motion.* Motion made last Monday to be debated to-day, "That, for the future, instead of that vulgar potation called porter, the honourable members may be supplied with a proper quantity of Irish usquebagh.

"Dermot O'Droheda + his mark."

O'Dro. [*Gets up.*] That's I, myself.

Pres. Mr. O'Droheda.

O'Dro. Mr. President, the case is this; it is not becase I am any grate lover of that same usquebagh that I have set my mark to the motion, but becase I did not think it was dacent for a number of jontlemen, that were, d'ye see, met to settle the affairs of the nation, to be guzzling pots of porter. To be sure the liquor is a pretty sort of a liquor enough, when a man is hot with trotting between a couple of poles; but this is another guess matter, becase why, the head is concerned; and if it was not for the malt and the haps, dibble burn me but I would as soon take a drink from the Thames as your porter. But as to usquebagh; ah, long life to the liquor!—it is an

exhilirator of the bowels, and a stomatic to the head; I say, Mr. President, it invigorates, it stimulates, it—in short it is the onliest liquor of life, and no man alive will die whilst he drinks it.

[*Sits down.* TWIST *gets up, having a piece of paper, containing the heads of what he says, in his hat.*

Pres. Mr. Timothy Twist.

Twist. Mr. President, I second Mr. O'Droheda's motion; and, sir, give me leave—I say, Mr. President—[*looks in his hat*]—give me leave to observe, that, sir, though it is impossible to add any force to what has been advanced by my honourable friend in the straps; yet, sir, [*looks into his hat again,*] it may, sir, I say, be necessary to obviate some objections that may be made to the motion; and first, it may be thought—I say, sir, some gentlemen may think, that this may prove pernicious to our manufacture—[*looks in his hat,*] and the duty doubtless it is of every member of this illustrious assembly to have a particular eye unto that; but Mr. President—sir—[*looks in his hat, is confused, and sits down.*]

Pres. Mr. Twist, O pray finish, Mr. Twist.

Twist. [*gets up.*] I say, Mr. President, that, sir, if sir, it be considered that—as—I say—[*looks in his hat*]—I have nothing further to say.

[*Sits down, and* STRAP *gets up.*

Pres. Mr. Strap.

Strap. Mr. President, it was not my intention to trouble the assembly upon this occasion, but when I hear insinuations thrown out by gentlemen, where the interest of this country is so deeply concerned, I own I cannot sit silent; and give me leave to say, sir, there never came before this

assembly a point of more importance than this; it strikes, sir, at the very root, sir, of your constitution; for, sir, what does this motion imply? it implies that porter, a wholesome, domestic manufacture, is to be prohibited at once. And for what, sir? for a foreign, pernicious commodity. I had, sir, formerly the honour, in conjunction with my learned friend in the leather apron, to expel *sherbet* from amongst us, as I looked upon lemons as a fatal and foreign fruit; and can it be thought, sir, that I will sit silent to this? No, sir, I will put my shoulders strongly against it; I will oppose it *manibus totibus*. For should this proposal prevail, it will not end here; fatal, give me leave to say, will, I foresee, be the issue; and I shan't be surprised, in a few days, to hear, from the same quarter, a motion for the expulsion of gin, and a premium for the importation of whiskey.

[*A hum of approbation, with significant nods and winks from the other members. He sits down; and* ANVIL *and another member get up together; some cry* ANVIL, *others* JACOBS.

Pres. Mr. Anvil.

Anvil. Mr. President, sir—

[*The members all blow their noses, and cough;* ANVIL *talks all the while, but is not heard.*

Pres. Silence, gentlemen; pray gentlemen. A worthy member is up.

Anvil. I say, Mr. President, that if we consider this case in its utmost extent—[*all the members cough, and blow their noses again*]—I say, sir, I will. Nay, I insist on being heard. If any gentleman has any thing to say any where else, I'll hear him.

[*Members all laugh, and* ANVIL *sits down in a passion, and* SLAUGHTER *gets up.*

Pres. Mr. Samuel Slaughter.

Slaugh. Sir, I declare it, at the bare hearing of this here motion, I am all over in a sweat; for my part I can't think what gentlemen mean by talking in that there manner; not but I likes that every man should deliver his mind; I does mine; it has been ever my way; and, when a member opposes me, I like him the better for it; it's right; I am pleas'd; he can't please me more; it is as it should be; and though I differ from the honourable gentleman in the flannel night-cap, over the way, yet I am pleased to hear him say what he thinks; for, sir, as I said, it is always my rule to say what I think, right or wrong—[*a loud laugh.*] Ay, ay, gentlemen may laugh, with all my heart; I am used to it, I don't mind it a farthing; but, sir, with regard to that there motion, I entirely agree with my worthy friend with the pewter pot at his mouth. Now, sir, I would fain ask any gentleman this here question; Can any thing in nature be more natural for an Englishman, than porter? I declare, Mr. President, I think it the most wholesomest liquor in the world. But if it must be a change, let us change it for rum, a wholesome palatable liquor, a liquor that—in short, Mr. President, I don't know such a liquor. Ay, gentlemen may stare; I say, and I say it upon my conscience, I don't know such a liquor. Besides, I think there is in this here affair a point of law, which I shall leave to the consideration of the learned, and for that there reason, I shall take up no more of your time.

[*He sits down,* CATCHPOLE *gets up.*

Pres. Mr. Catchpole.

Catch. I get up to the point of law. And though, sir, I am bred to the business, I can't say I am prepared for this question. But though this usquebagh, as a dram, may not (by name) be subject to a duty, yet it is my opinion, or rather belief, it will be considered, as in the case of horses, to come under the article of dry goods —But I move that another day this point be debated.

Slaugh. I second the motion.

[CATCHPOLE *gives a paper to the President, who reads it.*

Pres. Hear your motion.

" That it be debated next Thursday, whether the dram usquebagh is subject to a particular duty; or, as in the case of horses, to be considered under the article of dry goods."

All. Agreed, agreed.

Foote. "And now, ladies and gentlemen, having produced to you glaring proofs of our great ability in every species of oratory, having manifested, in the persons of our pupils, our infinite address in conveying our knowledge to others, we shall close our morning's lecture, instituted for the public good, with a proposal for the particular improvement of individuals. We are ready to give private instructions to any reverend gentleman in his probationary sermon for a lectureship; to young barristers who have causes to open, or motions to make; to all candidates for the sock or buskin; or to the new members of any of those oratorical societies with which this metropolis is at present so plentifully stocked.

THE

MAYOR OF GARRATT,

A COMEDY, IN TWO ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

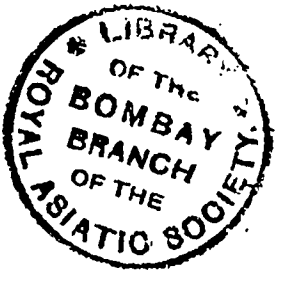
REMARKS.

THE plot of this humourous and entertaining comedy was founded on an old custom of choosing a mock parliamentary representative for the village of Garratt, near Wandsworth, in Surrey; now discontinued in common with many other revels, though the people cherish the return of such festivals, and look upon them, as Sir Jacob observes, as sacredly as on *Magna Charta.*

It appeared at the Haymarket, 1763; its success was very great, and it kept possession of the stage from that time to the present, being now often brought out to relieve the dulness of the modern comic muse. In 1794, old Bannister, in the boldly-drawn character of Major Sturgeon, and his son, as Jerry, contributed to revive this piece at the same house (rebuilt) with increased éclat; for, about that period, the spirit of *volunteering* became general, and the military mania diffused itself among all classes; and they repaired to the scene where one of the most ridiculous among themselves exposed his absurdity, they laughed at his droll situations and mal-adroitness with profit, and avoided his humiliations. Prodigious applause ever attends the representation of the *Mayor of Garratt,* particularly in the garden scene.

When this play first appeared, the voice of envy denied its originality, attributing the idea of the plot to have been taken from Shadwell's "Epsom Wells," performed just ninety years before. Yet even poor Tom Shadwell was denied the small praise of originality by his cotemporaries!

Numerous editions of the Mayor of Garratt have been printed, of various sizes, and several with embellishments; and it has been *cut down* occasionally into a *petite piece*, or interlude, at minor theatres, under the specious title of Jerry Sneak, &c. &c.


LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

		At the revival in 179[illegible]
MAJOR STURGEON	*Mr. Bannister.*	*Mr. Bannister.*
SIR JACOB JOLLUP	*Mr. Waldron.*	*Mr. Waldron.*
BRUIN	*Mr. Wright*	*Mr. Benson.*
LINT	*Mr. Wrighten*	*Mr. Ledger.*
ROGER	*Mr. Holcraft.*	*Mr. Waldron, jun.*
MOB	*Messrs. Helme, Nash, &c.*	*Mr. Evatt, &c.*
SNUFFLE	*Mr. Burton.*	*Mr. Lyons.*
CRISPIN HEEL-TAP	*Mr. Griffiths*	*Mr. Burton.*
JERRY SNEAK	*Mr. Dodd.*	*Mr. J. Bannister.*

WOMEN.

MRS. BRUIN	*Miss Simson*	*Mrs. Booth.*
MRS. SNEAK	*Mrs. Wrighten*	*Mrs. Webb.*

SCENE—Garratt-lane, and Sir Jacob's House there.

THE

MAYOR OF GARRATT.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

SCENE.—*Sir* JACOB'S *House, at* Garratt.

Enter Sir JACOB.

Sir Jac. Roger—

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Anan, sir—

Sir Jac. Sir, sirrah! and why not *Sir Jacob*, you rascal? Is that all your manners? Has his Majesty dubbed me a Knight for you to make me a *Mister?* Are the candidates near upon coming?

Rog. Nic Goose, the tailor, from Putney, they say, will be here in a crack, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Has Margery fetched in the linen?

Rog. Yes, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Are the pigs and the poultry locked up in the barn?

Rog. Safe, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. And the plate and spoons in the pantry?

Rog. Yes, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Then give me the key; the mob will

soon be upon us; all is fish that comes to their net. Has Ralph laid the cloth in the hall?

Rog. Yes, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Then let him bring out the turkey and chine, and be sure there is plenty of mustard; and, d'ye hear, Roger, do you stand yourself at the gate, and be careful who you let in.

Rog. I will, Sir Jacob. [*Exit* ROGER.

Sir Jac. So, now I believe things are pretty secure: but I can't think what makes my daughters so late ere they— [*Knocking at the gate.* Who is that, Roger?

Rog. [*without.*] Master Lint, the *potter-carrier*, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Let him in. What the deuce can he want?

Enter LINT.

Sir Jac. Well, master Lint, your *will?*

Lint. Why, I come, Sir Jacob, partly to inquire after your health; and partly, as I may say, to settle the business of the day.

Sir Jac. What business?

Lint. Your worship knoweth, this being the day of election, the rabble may be riotous; in which case, maims, bruises, contusions, dislocations, fractures simple and compound, may likely ensue: now your worship need not be told, that I am not only a pharmacopolist, or vender of drugs, but likewise chirurgeon, or healer of wounds.

Sir Jac. True, master Lint, and equally skilful in both.

Lint. It is your worship's pleasure to say so, Sir Jacob: Is it your worship's will that I lend a ministering hand to the maimed?

Sir Jac. By all means.

Lint. And to whom must I bring in my bill?

Sir Jac. Doubtless, the vestry.

Lint. Your worship knows, that, kill or cure, I have contracted to physic the parish-poor by the great [*gross*]: but this must be a separate charge.

Sir Jac. No, no; all under one: come, master Lint, don't be unreasonable.

Lint. Indeed, Sir Jacob, I can hardly afford it. What with the dearness of drugs, and the number of patients the peace has procured me, I cannot get salt to my porridge.

Sir Jac. "Bad this year, better the next"—We must take things rough and smooth as they run.

Lint. Indeed I have a very hard bargain.

Sir Jac. No such matter; we are, neighbour Lint, a little better instructed. Formerly, indeed, a fit of illness was very expensive; but now, physic is cheaper than food.

Lint. Marry, heaven forbid!

Sir Jac. No, no; your essences, elixirs, emetics, sweats, drops, and your pastes, and your pills, have silenced your pestles and mortars. Why a fever, that would formerly have cost you a fortune, you may now cure for twelve penn'orth of powder.

Lint. Or kill, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. And then, as to your scurvies and gouts, rheumatisms, consumptions, coughs, and catarrhs, tar-water* and turpentine will make you as sound as a roach.

---

* *Tar-water.* Poor Berkley, Bishop of Cloyne, really believed this *simple* a specific for all disorders, and actually

Lint. Nostrums!

Sir J. Specifics, specifics, master Lint.

Lint. I am very sorry to find a man of your worship's———Sir Jacob, a promoter of puffs; an encourager of quacks, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Regulars, Lint, regulars; look at their names—Roger, bring me the news—not a soul of them but is either P. L. or M. D.

Lint. Plaguy liars! Murderous dogs!

ROGER *brings the newspaper.*

Sir Jac. Liars! Here, look at the list of their cures. The oath of Margery Squab, of Ratcliff-Highway, spinster.

Lint. Perjuries.

Sir Jac. And see here, the churchwardens have signed it.

Lint. Fictitious, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Sworn before the worshipful Mr. Justice Drowsy, this thirteenth day of—

Lint. Forgery.

Sir Jac. Why, hark'ye, sirrah, do you think Mr. Justice Drowsy would set his hand to a forgery?

Lint. I know, Sir Jacob, that woman; she has been cured of fifty diseases in a fortnight, and every one of 'em mortal.

Sir Jac. You impudent—

Lint. Of a dropsy, by West—

Sir. Jac. Audacious—

Lint. A cancer, by Cleland—

---

crammed it down the throats of thousands. A goodly octavo volume brought gentle as well as simple into a belief in tar-water, and the government were induced to lend a hand to his schemes.

Sir Jac. Arrogant—
Lint. A palsy, by Walker—
Sir Jac. Impertinent—
Lint. Gout and sciatica, by Rock.
Sir Jac. Insolent—
Lint. Consumption, by Stevens's drops—
Sir Jac. Paltry—
Lint. And squinting, by the Chevalier Taylor—
Sir Jac. Pill-gilding puppy!*
Lint. And as to the Justice, so the affidavit brings him a shilling—
Sir Jac. Why, harkye, rascal, how dare you abuse the commission?—You blood-letting, tooth-drawing, corn-cutting, worm-killing, blistering, glistering—
Lint. Bless me, Sir Jacob, I did not think to—
Sir Jac. What, sirrah, do you insult me in my office? Here, Roger, out with him—turn him out.
Lint. Sir, as I hope to be— [*Exit.*
Sir Jac. Away with him. You scoundrel, if my clerk was within, I'd send you this instant to Bridewell. Things are come to a pretty pass, indeed, if, after all my reading in Wood, and Nelson, and Burn; if after, twenty years' attendance at turnpike-meetings, sessions petty and quarter; if after settling of rates, licensing ale-houses, and committing of vagrants—But all respect to authority is lost; and *Unus Quorum* tacked to a man's

* This enumeration of famous medical impostors by name, may be hailed as the perfection of legitimate satire. Of *Taylor*, we may add, that a life of this scoundrel, from the pen of his own son, disclosed facts that make the pen tremble at the recital.

name, is no more regarded now-a-days, than a petty constable. [*Knocking.*] Roger, see who is at the gate? Why the fellow is deaf.

Rog. Justice Sturgeon, the fishmonger, from Brentford.

Sir Jac. Gad's my life!—and Major to the Middlesex militia. Usher him in, Roger.

Enter MAJOR STURGEON.

Sir Jac. I could have wished you had come a little sooner, Major Sturgeon.

Major. Why, what has been the matter, Sir Jacob?

Sir Jac. There has, Major, been here an impudent pill-monger, who has dared to scandalize the whole body of the bench.

Major. Insolent companion! had I been here, I would have mittimused the rascal at once.

Sir Jac. No, no, he wanted the Major more than the magistrate; a few smart strokes from your cane would have fully answered the purpose. —Well, Major, our wars are done; the rattling drum and squeaking fife now wound our ears no more.

Major. True, Sir Jacob, our corps is disembodied, so the French may sleep in security.

Sir Jac. But, Major, was it not rather late in life for you to enter upon the profession of arms?

Major. A little awkward in the beginning, Sir Jacob: the great difficulty they had was, to get me to turn out my toes; but use, use reconciles all them kind of things: why, after my first campaign, I no more minded the noise of the guns than a flea-bite.

Sir Jac. No!

Major. No. There is more made of these mat-

ters than they merit. For the general good, indeed, I am glad of the peace; but as to my single self—And yet, we have had some desperate duty, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. No doubt.

Major. Oh! such marchings and counter-marchings, from Brentford to Eling, from Eling to Acton, from Acton to Uxbridge; the dust flying, sun scorching, men sweating—Why, there was our last expedition to Hounslow, that day's work carried off Major Molossas. Bunhill-fields never saw a braver commander! He was an irreparable loss to the service.

Sir Jac. How came that about?

Major. Why, it was partly the Major's own fault; I advised him to pull off his spurs before he went upon action; but he was resolute, and would not be ruled.

Sir Jac. Spirit; zeal for the service.

Major. Doubtless—But to proceed: in order to get our men in good spirits, we were quartered at Isleworth, the evening before; at day-break, our regiment formed at Hounslow town's end, as it might be about here. The Major made a fine disposition: on we marched, the men all in high spirits, to attack the gibbet where *Gardel* is hanging; but turning down a narrow lane to the left, as it might be about there, in order to possess a pig's stye, that we might take the gallows in flank, and, at all events, secure a retreat, who should come by but a drove of fat oxen for Smithfield. The drums beat in the front, the dogs barked in the rear, the oxen set up a gallop; on they came thundering upon us, broke through our ranks in an instant, and threw the whole corps into confusion.

Sir Jac. Terrible!

Major. The Major's horse took to his heels; away he scoured over the heath. That gallant commander stuck both his spurs into the flank, and for some time held by his mane; but, in crossing a ditch, the horse threw up his head, gave the Major a dowse in the chops, and plumped him into a gravel-pit, just by the powder-mills.

Sir Jac. Dreadful!

Major. Whether from the fall or the fright, the Major *moved off* in a month—Indeed, it was an unfortunate day for us all.

Sir Jac. As how?

Major. Why, as Captain Cucumber, Lieutenant Patty Pan, Ensign Tripe, and myself, were returning to town in the Turnham-Green stage, we were stopped near the Hammersmith turnpike, and robbed and stripped by a footpad.

Sir Jac. An unfortunate day, indeed!

Major. But in some measure to make me amends, I got the Major's commission.

Sir Jac. You did.

Major. O yes. I was the only one of the corps that could ride; otherwise, we always succeeded *of course:* no jumping over heads; no underhand work among us; all men of honour; and I must do the regiment the justice to say, there never was a set of more amiable officers.

Sir Jac. Quiet and peaceable.

Major. As lambs, Sir Jacob. Excepting one boxing-bout at the Three-Compasses in Acton, between Captain Shears and the Colonel, concerning a game at All-fours, I don't remember a single dispute.

Sir Jac. Why, that was mere mutiny; the Captain ought to have been broke.

Major. He was; for the Colonel not only took away his cockade, but his custom; and I don't think poor Captain Shears has done a stitch for him since.

Sir Jac. But you soon supplied the loss of Molossas?

Major. In part only: no, Sir Jacob, he had great experience; he was trained up to arms from his youth: at sixteen he trailed a pike in the Artillery-ground; at eighteen got a company in the Smithfield pioneers; and by the time he was twenty, was made aid-de-camp to Sir Jeffery Grub, Knight, Alderman, and Colonel of *the Yellows.*

Sir Jac. A rapid rise!

Major. Yes, he had a genius for war; but what I wanted in practice, I made up by doubling my diligence. Our porter at home had been a serjeant of marines; so, after shop was shut up at night, he used to teach me my exercise; and he had not to deal with a dunce, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Your progress was great.

Major. Amazing. In a week I could shoulder, and rest, and poize, and turn to the right, and wheel to the left; and in less than a month I could fire without winking or blinking.

Sir Jac. A perfect Hannibal!

Major. Ah, and then I learnt to form lines, and hollows, and squares, and evolutions, and revolutions: let me tell you, Sir Jacob, it was lucky that Monsieur kept his myrmidons at home, or we should have peppered his flat-bottom'd boats. ..

Sir. Jac. Ay, marry, he had a marvellous escape.

Major. We would a taught him what a Briton can do, who is fighting *pro arvis* and *focus.*

Sir Jac. Pray now, Major, which do you look upon as the best disciplined troops, the London regiments, or the Middlesex militia?

Major. Why, Sir Jacob, it does not become me to say; but lack-a-day, they have never seen any service—Holiday soldiers! Why, I don't believe, unless, indeed, upon a lord-mayor's day, and that mere matter of accident, that they were ever wet to the skin in their lives.

Sir Jac. Indeed!

Major. No! soldiers for sun-shine, cockneys; they have not the appearance, the air, the freedom, the *Jenny sequi* that—Oh, could you but see me salute! you have never a spontoon in the house?

Sir Jac. No; but we could get you a shove-pike.

Major. No matter. Well, Sir Jacob, and how are your fair daughters, sweet Mrs. Sneak, and the lovely Mrs. Bruin; is she as lively and as brilliant as ever?

Sir Jac. Oh, oh, now the murder is out; this visit was intended for them; come, own now, Major, did not you expect to meet with them here? You officers are men of such gallantry!

Major. Why, we do tickle up the ladies, Sir Jacob; there is no resisting a red coat.

Sir Jac. True, true, Major.

Major. But that is now all over with me. "Farewell to the plumed steeds and neighing troops," as the black man says in the play; like the Roman *censurer*, I shall retire to my Savine field, and there cultivate cabbages.

Sir Jac. Under the shade of your laurels.

Major. True; I have done with the Major, and

now return to the magistrate; *Cedunt arma togge.**

Sir Jac. Still in the service of your country.

Major. True; man was not made for himself; d so, thinking that this would prove a busy day in the *justicing way*, I am come, Sir Jacob, to lend you a hand.

Sir Jac. Done like a neighbour.

Major. I have brought, as I suppose most of our business will be in the battery way, some warrants and mittimuses ready filled up, with all but the names of the parties, in order to save time.

Sir Jac. A provident magistrate.

Major. Pray, how shall we manage as to the article of swearing; for I reckon we shall have oaths as plenty as hops.

Sir Jac. Why, with regard to that branch of our business to-day, I believe, the law must be suffered to sleep.

Major. I should think we might pick up something that's pretty that way.

Sir Jac. No, poor rascals, they would not be able to pay; and as to the stocks, we should never find room for their legs.

Major. Pray, Sir Jacob, is Matthew Marrowbone, the butcher of your town, living or dead?

Sir Jac. Living.

Major. And swears as much as he used?

Sir Jac. An altered man, Major; not an oath comes out of his mouth.

Major. You surprise me; why, when he frequented our town of a market-day, he has taken out a guinea in oaths—and quite changed?

---

* Variation. *Seddunt army tuggy*, a corruption of *Cedunt arma togæ*.

Sir Jac. Entirely; they say his wife has made him a Methodist, and that he preaches at Kennington-common.

Major. What a deal of mischief those rascals do in the country—Why, then, we have entirely lost him?

Sir Jac. In that way; but I got a brace of *bind-overs* from him last week for a couple of bastards.

Major. Well done, master Matthew—but pray now, Sir Jacob— [*Mob without huzza!*

Sir Jac. What's the matter now, Roger?

Enter ROGER.

Rog. The electors desire to know, if your worship has any body to recommend?

Sir Jac. By no means; let them be free in their choice; I sha'n't interfere.

Rog. And if your worship has any objection to Crispin Heel-tap, the cobbler's, being returning officer?

Sir Jac. None, provided the rascal can keep himself sober. Is he there?

Rog. Yes, Sir Jacob: make way there; stand further off from the gate: here is madam Sneak in a chair, along with her husband.

Major. Gad-so, you will permit me to convoy her in? [*Exit* MAJOR.

Sir Jac. Now, here is one of the evils of war. This Sturgeon was as pains-taking a Billingsgate-broker as any in the bills of mortality. But *the fish* is got out of his element; the soldier has quite demolished the citizen.

Enter Mrs. SNEAK, *handed by the* MAJOR.

Mrs. Sneak. Dear Major, I demand a million

of pardons. I have given you a profusion of trouble; but my husband is such a goose-cap, that I can't get no good out of him, at home or abroad—Jerry, Jerry Sneak!—Your blessing, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Daughter, you are welcome to Garratt.

Mrs. Sneak. Why, Jerry Sneak! I say.

Enter SNEAK, *with a band-box, a hoop-petticoat under his arm, and cardinal, &c. &c. &c. &c.*

Sneak. Here, lovey.

Mrs. Sneak. Here, looby: there, lay these things in the hall; and then go and look after the horse: are you sure you have got all the things out of the chaise?

Sneak. Yes, chuck.

Mrs. Sneak. Then give me my fan.

[JERRY *drops the things in searching his pocket for the fan.*

Mrs. Sneak. Did ever mortal see such a—I declare, I am quite ashamed to be seen with him abroad: go, get you gone out of my sight.

Sneak. I go, lovey: Good-day to my father-in-law.

Sir. Jac. I am glad to see you, son Sneak: but where is your brother Bruin and his wife?

Sneak. He will be here anon, father Sir Jacob: he did but just step into the Alley, to gather how tickets were selling.

Sir Jac. Very well, son Sneak.

[*Exit* SNEAK.

Mrs. Sneak. Son! yes, and a pretty son you have provided.

Sir Jac. I hope all for the best: why, what terrible work there would have been, had you married such a one as your sister? one house

could never have contained you—Now, I thought this meek mate—

Mrs. Sneak. Meek! a mushroom! a milksop!

Sir Jac. Look'ye, Molly, I have married you to a man; take care you don't make him a monster. [*Exit* SIR JAC.

Mrs. Sneak. Monster! Why, Major, the fellow has no more heart than a mouse: had my kind stars indeed allotted me a military man, I should, doubtless, have deported myself in a beseemingly manner.

Major. Unquestionably, madam.

Mrs. Sneak. Nor would the Major have found, had it been my fortune to intermarry with him, that Molly Jollup would have dishonoured his cloth.

Major. I should have been too happy.

Mrs. Sneak. Indeed, sir, I reverence the army; they are all so brave; so polite; so every thing a woman can wish—

Major. Oh! madam—

Mrs. Sneak. So elegant; so genteel; so obliging: and then the rank; why, who would dare to affront the wife of a Major?

Major. No man with impunity; that I take the freedom to say, madam.

Mrs. Sneak. I know it, good sir: Oh! I am no stranger to what I have missed.

Major. Oh, madam!—Let me die, but she has infinite merit. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Sneak. Then to be join'd to a sneaking, slovenly cit; a paltry, praying, pityful pin-maker!

Major. Melancholy!

Mrs. Sneak. To be jostled and crammed with the crowd; no respect, no place, no precedence; to be choked with the smoke of the city; no

country jaunts but to Islington; no balls but at Pewterers' Hall.

Major. Intolerable!

Mrs. Sneak. I see, sir, you have a proper sense of my sufferings.

Major. And would shed my best blood to relieve them.

Mrs. Sneak. Gallant gentleman!

Major. The brave must favour the fair.

Mrs. Sneak. Intrepid Major!

Major. Divine Mrs. Sneak!

Mrs. Sneak. Obliging commander!

Major. Might I be permitted the honour—

Mrs. Sneak. Sir—

Major. Just to ravish a kiss from your hand.

Mrs. Sneak. You have a right to all we can grant.

Major. Courteous, condescending, complying—Hum! Ha!

Enter SNEAK.

Sneak, Chuck, my brother and sister Bruin are just turning the corner; the Clapham stage was quite full, and so they came by water.

Mrs. Sneak. I wish they had all been sous'd in the Thames—a prying impertinent puppy!

Major. Next time I will clap a sentinel to secure the door.

Mrs. Sneak. Major Sturgeon, permit me to withdraw for a moment; my dress demands a little repair.

Major. Your ladyship's most entirely devoted.

Mrs. Sneak: Ladyship! he is the very Broglio and Belleisle of the army!

Sneak: Shall I wait upon you, dove?

Mrs. Sneak. No, *dolt;* what, would you leave

the Major alone? Is that your manners, you mongrel?

Major. Oh, madam, I can never be alone; your sweet *idera* will be my constant companion.

Mrs. Sneak. Mark that: I am sorry, sir, I am obligated to leave you.

Major. Madam—

Mrs. Sneak. Especially with such a wretched companion.

Major. Oh, madam—

Mrs. Sneak. But as soon as my dress is restored, I shall fly to relieve your distress.

Major. For that moment I shall wait with the greatest impatience.

Mrs. Sneak. Courteous commander.

Major. Paragon of women!

Mrs. Sneak. Adieu!

Major. Adieu.

[*Exit Mrs.* SNEAK.

Sneak. Notwithstanding, sir, all my chicken has said, I am special company when she is not by.

Major. I doubt not, master Sneak.

Sneak. If you would but come one Thursday night to our club, at the Nag's Head, in the Poultry, you would meet some roaring, rare boys, i'faith: there's Jemmy Perkins, the packer; little Tom Simkins, the grocer; h nest master Muzzle, the midwife—

Major. A goodly company!

Sneak. Ay, and then sometimes we have the Choice Spirits from Comus's Court, and we crack jokes, and are so jolly and funny: I have learnt myself to sing "An old woman clothed in gray." But I durst not sing out loud, because my wife would overhear me; and she says as how I bawl worser than the broom-man.

Major. And you must not think of disobliging your lady.

Sneak. I never does: I never contradicts her, not I.

Major. That's right: she is a woman of infinite merit.

Sneak. O, a power: and don't you think she is very pretty withal?

Major. A Venus!

Sneak. Yes, werry like Wenus—Mayhap you have known her some time?

Major. Long.

Sneak. Belike, before she was married?

Major. I did, Master Sneak.

Sneak. Ay, when she was a wirgin. I thought you was an old acquaintance, by your kissing her hand; for we ben't quite so familiar as that—but then, indeed, we ha'n't been married a year.

Major. The mere honey-moon.

Sneak. Ay, ay, I suppose we shall come to it by degrees.

Bruin. [*within*] Come along, Jane; why, you are as pursy and lazy, you jade—

Enter BRUIN *and* WIFE; BRUIN *with a cotton cap on; his Wife with his wig, great coat, and fishing-rod.*

Bruin. Come, Jane, give me my wig; you slut, how you have tousled the curls. Master Sneak, a good morning to you. Sir, I am your humble servant, unknown.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Mrs. Sneak begs to speak with the Major.

Major. I will wait on the lady immediately.

Sneak. Don't tarry an instant; you can't think how impatient she is. [*Exit* MAJOR.

Sneak. A good morrow to you, brother Bruin; you have had a warm walk across the fields.

Mrs. Bruin. Good lord, I am all in a muck—

Bruin. And who may you thank for it, hussy? If you had got up time enough, you might have secured the stage; but you are a lazy lie-a-bed—

Mrs. Bruin. There's Mr. Sneak keeps my sister *a chay.*

Bruin. And so he may; but I know better what to do with my money: indeed, if the war had but continued awhile, I don't know what mought ha' been done; but this plaguy peace, with a pox to't, has knocked up all the trade of *the Alley.*

Mrs. Bruin. For the matter of that, we can afford it well enough as it is.

Bruin. And how do you know that? Who told you as much, Mrs. Mixen? I hope I know the world better than to trust my concerns with a wife: no, no, thank you for that Mrs. Jane.

Mrs. Bruin. And pray who is more fitterer to be trusted?

Bruin. Hey-day! Why, the wench is bewitched: come, come, let's have none of your palaver here.—Take twelve-pence and pay the waterman—but first, see if he has broke none of the pipes.—And, d'ye hear, Jane, be sure to lay the fishing-rod safe. [*Exit* Mrs. BRUIN.

Sneak. Odd's me, how finely she's managed! what would I give to have my wife as much under!

Bruin. It is all your own fault, brother Sneak.

Sneak. D'ye think so? she is a sweet pretty creature.

Bruin. A vixen.

Sneak. Why, to say the truth, she does now and then hector a little; and, between ourselves, domineers like the devil. O Lord, I lead the life of a dog: why, she allows me but two shillings a week for my pocket.

Bruin. No!

Sneak. No, man; 'tis she that receives and pays all: and then I am forced to trot after her to church, with her cardinal, pattens, and prayer-book, for all the world as if I was still a 'prentice.

Bruin. 'Zounds! I would souse them all in the kennel.

Sneak. I durst not.—And then at table, I never gets what I loves.

Bruin. The devil!

Sneak. No; she always helps me herself to the tough drumsticks of turkies, and the damned fat flaps of shoulders of mutton; I don't think I have eat a bit of under-crust since we have been married: you see, brother Bruin, I am almost as thin as a lath.

Bruin. An absolute skeleton!

Sneak. Now, if you think I could carry my point, I would so swinge and leather my lambkin! God, I would so curry and claw her.

Bruin. By the lord Harry, she richly deserves it.

Sneak. Will you, brother, lend me a lift?

Bruin. Command me at all times.

Sneak. Why then, I will verily pluck up a spirit; and the first time she offers to—

Mrs. Sneak. [*within.*] Jerry, Jerry Sneak!

Sneak. Gad's my life, sure as a gun that's her voice: look-ye, brother, I don't choose to breed a disturbance in another body's house; but as soon as ever I get home—

Bruin. Now is your time.

Sneak. No, no; it would not be decent.

Mrs. Sneak. [*within*] Jerry! Jerry!—

Sneak. I come, lovey. But you will be sure to stand by me?

Bruin. Trot, nincompoop.

Sneak. Well, if I don't—I wish—

Mrs. Sneak. [*within*] Where is this lazy puppy a-loitering?

Sneak. I come, chuck, as fast as I can—Good Lord, what a sad life I do lead! [*Exit* SNEAK.

Bruin. Ex quovis linguo: who can make a silk purse of a sow's ear?

Enter SIR JACOB.

Sir Jac. Come, son Bruin, we are all seated at table, man; we have but just time for a snack: the candidates are near upon coming.

Bruin. A poor, paltry, mean-spirited—Damn it, before I would submit to such a—

Sir Jac. Come, come, man; don't be so crusty.

Bruin. I follow, Sir Jacob: Damme, when once a man gives up his prerogative, he might as well give up—But, however, it is no bread and butter of mine—Jerry, Jerry!——Zounds, I would Jerry and jerk her too. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE continues.

Sir JACOB, *Major* STURGEON, *Mr. and Mrs.* BRUIN, *Mr. and Mrs.* SNEAK, *discovered.*

Mrs. Sneak. Indeed, Major, not a grain of curiosity. Can it be thought that we, who have a

Lord-Mayor's show every year, can take any pleasure in this?

Major. In time of war, madam, these meetings are not amiss; I fancy a man might pick up a good many recruits [at them]: but in these piping times of peace, I wonder Sir Jacob permits it.

Sir Jac. It would, Major, cost me my popularity to quash it: the common people are as fond of their customs as the barons were of their *Magna Charta:* besides, my tenants make some little advantage.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Crispin Heel-Tap, with the electors, are set out from the Adam and Eve.

Sir Jac. Gad-so, then they will soon be upon us: come, good folks, the balcony will give us the best view of the whole. Major, you will take the ladies under protection.

Major. Sir Jacob, I am upon guard.

Sir Jac. I can tell you, this Heel-Tap is an arch rascal.—

Sneak. And plays the best game at cribbage in the whole corporation of Garratt.

Mrs. Sneak. That puppy will always be a chattering.

Sneak. Nay, I did but—

Mrs. Sneak. Hold your tongue, or I'll send you home in an instant—

Sir Jac. Prithee, daughter!—You may to-day, Major, meet with something that will put you in mind of more important transactions.

Major. Perhaps so.

Sir Jac. Lack-a-day, all men are alike; their principles exactly the same: for though art and

education may disguise or polish the manners, the same motives and springs are universally planted.

Major. Indeed!

Sir Jac. Why, in this mob, this group of plebeians, you will meet with materials to make a Sylla, a Cicero, a Solon, or a Cæsar: let them but change conditions, and the world's great lord had been but the best wrestler on the green.

Major. Ay, ay, I could have told these things formerly; but since I have been in the army, I have entirely neglected the classics.

[*Mob without huzza.*

Sir Jac. But the heroes are at hand, Major.

Sneak. Father Sir Jacob, might not we have a tankard of stingo above?

Sir Jac. By all means.

Sneak. D'ye hear, Roger.

[*Exeunt into the Balcony.*

SCENE—A Street.

Enter MOB, *with* HEEL-TAP *at their Head; some* [banners inscribed] *carrying* "*a* Goose"; *others* "*a* Mug"; *others* "*a* Primer."

Heel-Tap. Silence, there; silence,

1*st Mob.* Hear neighbour Heel-Tap.

2*d Mob.* Ay, ay, hear Crispin.

3*d Mob.* Ay, ay, hear him, hear Crispin: He will put us into the model of the thing at once.

Heel-Tap. Why then, silence! I say.

All. Silence.

Heel-Tap. Silence, and let us proceed, neighbours, with all the decency and confusion usual upon these occasions.

1*st Mob.* Ay, ay, there is no doing without that.

All. No, no, no.

Heel-Tap. Silence then, and keep the peace: what, is there no respect paid to authority? am not I the returning officer?

All. Ay, ay, ay.

Heel-Tap. Chosen by yourselves, and approved of by Sir Jacob?

All. True, true.

Heel-Tap. Well, then, be silent and civil; stand back there, that gentleman without a shirt, and make room for your betters. Where's Simon Snuffle, the sexton?

Snuffle. Here.

Heel-Tap. Let him come forward; we appoint him our secretary: for Simon is a scollard, and can read written hand; and so let him be respected accordingly.

3d Mob. Room for Master Snuffle.

Heel-Tap. Here, stand by me: and let us, neighbours, proceed to open the *premunire* of the thing: but first, your reverence to the lord of the manor: a long life and a merry one to our landlord, Sir Jacob! Huzza!

Mob. Huzza!

Sneak. How fares it, honest Crispin?

Heel-Tap. Servant, Master Sneak.—Let us now open the premunire of the thing, which I shall do briefly, with all the loquacity possible; that is in a medium way; which, that we may the better do it, let the secretary read the names of the candidates, and what they say for themselves; and then we shall know what to say of them: Master Snuffle, begin.

Snuffle. "To the worthy inhabitants of the ancient corporation of Garratt: Gentlemen, your votes and interest are humbly requested in favour of Timothy Goose, to succeed your late worthy

mayor, Mr. Richard Dripping, in the said office, he being"——

Heel-Tap. This Goose is but a kind of Gosling, a sort of sneaking scoundrel: who is he?

Snuffle. A journeyman tailor, from Putney.

Heel-Tap. A journeyman tailor! A rascal, has he the impudence to transpire to be mayor? D'ye consider, neighbours, the weight of this office? Why, it is a burden for the back of a porter; and can you think this cross-legged cabbage-eating son of a cucumber, this whey-faced ninny, who is but the ninth part of a man, has strength to support it?

1*st Mob.* No Goose! no Goose!

2*d Mob.* A Goose!

Heel-Tap. Hold your hissing, and proceed to the next.

Snuffle. "Your votes are desired for Matthew Mug."

1*st Mob.* A Mug! A Mug!

Heel-Tap. Oh, oh, what you are all ready to have a touch of the tankard; but, fair and soft, good neighbours, let us taste this Master Mug, before we swallow him; and, unless I am mistaken, you will find him a damned bitter draught.

1*st Mob.* A Mug! a Mug!

2*d Mob.* Hear him; hear Master Heel-Tap.

1*st Mob.* A Mug! a Mug!

Heel-Tap. Hark ye, you fellow, with your mouth full of Mug, let me ask you a question: bring him forward: pray is not this Matthew Mug a *victualler?*

3*d Mob.* I believe he may.

Heel-Tap. And lives at the sign of the Adam and Eve?

3*d Mob.* I believe he may.

Heel-Tap. Now, answer upon your honour, and as you are a gentleman, what is the present price of a quart of home-brewed, at the Adam and Eve?

3*d Mob.* I don't know.

Heel-Tap. You lie, sirrah: an't it a groat?

3*d Mob.* I believe it may.

Heel-Tap. Oh, may be so: now, neighbours, here's a pretty rascal; this same Mug, because, d'ye see, state-affairs would not jog glibly without laying a farthing a quart upon ale, this scoundrel, not contented to take things in a medium way, has had the impudence to raise it a penny.

Mob. No Mug! no Mug!

Heel-Tap. So, I thought I should crack Mr. Mug. Come, proceed to the next, Simon.

Snuffle. The next upon the list is Peter Primer, the schoolmaster.

Heel-Tap. Ay, neighbours, and a sufficient man: let me tell you, Master Primer is the man for my money, a man of learning; that can lay down the law; why, adzooks, he is wise enough to puzzle the parson; and then, how you have heard him oration at the Adam and Eve of a Saturday night, about Russia and Prussia: Egod, George Gage the exciseman is nothing at all to un.

4*th Mob.* A Primer.

Heel-Tap. Ay, if the folks above did but know him! Why, lads, he will make us all statesmen in time.

2*d Mob.* Indeed!

Heel-Tap. Why, he swears how all the miscarriages are owing to the great people's not learning to read.

3*d Mob.* Indeed!

Heel-Tap. For, says Peter, says he, if they would but once submit to be learned [*taught*] by

me, there is no knowing to what a pitch the nation might rise.

1*st Mob.* Ay, I wish they would [learn.]

Sneak. Crispin, what is Peter Primer a candidate?

Heel-Tap. He is, Master Sneak.

Sneak. Lord, I know him, mun, as well as my mother; why, I used to go to his lectures to Pewterers' Hall, 'long with Deputy Firkin.

Heel-Tap. Like enough.

Sneak. Odds-me, brother Bruin, can you tell what is become of my vife?

Bruin. She is gone off with the Major.

Sneak. Mayhap to take a walk in the garden; I will go and take a peep at what they are doing. [*Exit* SNEAK.

Mob without huzza.

Heel-Tap. Gad-so! the candidates are coming. Come, neighbours, range yourselves to the right and left, that you may be canvassed in order: let us see who comes first?

1*st Mob.* Master Mug.

Heel-Tap. Now, neighbours, have a good caution that this Master Mug does not cajole you; he is a damned palavering fellow.

Enter MATTHEW MUG.

Mug. Gentlemen, I am the lowest of your slaves: Mr. Heel-Tap, have the honour of kissing your hand.

Heel-Tap. There, did not I tell you?

Mug. Ah, my very good friend, I hope your father is well?

1*st Mob.* He is dead.

Mug. So he is. Mr. Grub, if my wishes prevail, your very good wife is in health.

2*d Mob.* Wife! I never was married.

Mug. No more you were. Well, neighbours and friends—Ah! what honest Dick Bennet.

3*d Mob.* My name is Gregory Gubbins.

Mug. You are right, it is so; and how fares it with good Master Gubbins?

3*d Mob.* Pretty tight, Master Mug.

Mug. I am exceedingly happy to hear it.

4*th Mob.* Hark ye, Master Mug.

Mug. Your pleasure, my very dear friend?

4*th Mob.* Why as how, and concerning our young one at home.

Mug. Right; she is a prodigious promising girl.

4*th Mob.* Girl! Zooks, why 'tis a boy.

Mug. True; a fine boy! I love and honour the child.

4*th Mob.* Nay, 'tis none such a child; but you promised to get un a place.

Mug. A place! what place?

4*th Mob.* Why, a gentleman's service, you know.

Mug. It is done; it is fixed; it is settled.

4*th Mob.* And when is the lad to take on?

Mug. He must go in a fortnight at farthest.

4*th Mob.* And is it a pretty goodish birth, Master Mug?

Mug. The best in the world; head-butler to Lady Barbara Bounce.

4*th Mob.* A lady!

Mug. The wages are not much, but the vails are amazing.

4*th Mob.* Barbara Bunch?

Mug. Yes; she has routs on Tuesdays and Sundays, and he gathers the tables; only he finds candles, cards, coffee, and tea.

4th Mob. Is Lady Barbara's work pretty tight?

Mug. As good as a sinecure; he only writes cards to her company, and dresses his mistress's hair.

4th Mob. Hair! Zounds, why Jack was bred to dressing of horses.

Mug. True; but he is suffered to do that by deputy.

4th Mob. May be so.

Mug. It is so. Hark ye, dear Heel-Tap, who is this fellow? I should remember his face.

Heel-Tap. And don't you?

Mug. Not I, I profess.

Heel-Tap. No!

Mug. No.

Heel-Tap. Well said, Master Mug; but come, time wears: have you any thing more to say to the Corporation?

Mug. Gentlemen of the Corporation of Garratt——

Heel-tap. Now, twig him; now, mind him: mark how he hawls his muscles about.

Mug. The honour I this day solicit will be to me the most honourable honour that can be conferred; and, should I succeed, you, gentlemen, may depend on my using my utmost endeavours to promote the good of the borough; to which purpose, the encouragement of your trade and manufactories will most principally tend. Garratt, it must be owned, is an inland town, and has not, like Wandsworth, and Fulham, and Putney, the glorious advantage of a port; but what Nature has denied, industry may supply: cabbages, carrots, and colly-flowers may be deemed, at present, your staple commodities; but why should not your commerce be extended? Were I, gentlemen,

worthy to advise, I should recommend the opening a new branch of trade: sparagrass, gentlemen, the manufacturing of sparagrass. Battersea, I own, gentlemen, bears, at present, the belle; but where lies the fault? In ourselves, gentlemen; let us, gentlemen, but exert our natural strength, and I will take upon me to say, that a hundred of grass, from the Corporation of Garratt, will, in a short time, at the London market, be held, at least, as an equivalent to a Battersea bundle.

Mob. A Mug! a Mug!

Heel-Tap. Damn the fellow, what a tongue he has! God, I must step in, or he will carry the day. Hark ye, Master Mug!

Mug. Your pleasure, my very good friend?

Heel-Tap. No flummering me: I tell thee, Matthew, 'two'n't do: why, as to this article of ale here, how comes it about that you have raised it a penny a quart?

Mug. A word in your ear, Crispin; you and your friends shall have it at three pence.

Heel-Tap. What, sirrah, d'ye offer a bribe! D'ye dare to corrupt me, you scoundrel!

Mug. Gentlemen———

Heel-Tap. Here, neighbours, the fellow has offered to bate a penny a quart, if so be as how I would be consenting to impose upon you.

Mob. No Mug! no Mug!

Mug. Neighbours, friends———

Mob. No, Mug!

Mug. I believe this is the first borough that ever was lost by the returning officer's refusing a bribe. [*Exit* MUG.

2*d Mob.* Let us go and pull down his sign.

Heel-Tap. Hold, hold, no riot: but, that we

may not give Mug time to pervert the votes and carry the day, let us proceed to the election.

Mob. Agreed; agreed!

[*Exit* HEEL-TAP *and* MOB.

Sir JACOB, BRUIN, *and Wife, come from the Balcony.*

Sir Jac. Well, son Bruin, how d'ye relish the Corporation of Garratt?

Bruin. Why, look ye, Sir Jacob, my way is always to speak what I think: I don't approve on't at all.

Mrs. Bruin. No!

Sir Jac. And what's your objection?

Bruin. Why, I was never over-fond of your May-games: besides, corporations are too serious things; they are edge-tools, Sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. That they are frequently tools, I can readily grant: but I never heard much of their edge.

Mrs. Bruin. Well, now, I protest, I am pleased with it mightily.

Bruin. And who the devil doubts it?—You women folks are easily pleased.

Mrs. Bruin. Well, I like it so well, that I hope to see one every year.

Bruin. Do you? Why then you will be damnably bit; you may take your leave, I can tell you, for this is the last you shall see.

Sir Jac. Fie, Mr. Bruin, how can you be such a bear: is that a manner of treating your wife!

Bruin. What, I suppose you would have me such a snivelling sot as your son-in-law Sneak, to truckle and cringe, to fetch and to———

Enter SNEAK, *in a violent hurry.*

Sneak. Where's brother Bruin? O Lord! brother, I have such a dismal story to tell you———

Bruin. What's the matter?

Sneak. Why, you know I went into the garden to look for my vife and the Major; and there I hunted and hunted as sharp as if it had been for one of my own minikens; but the deuce a Major or Madam could I see: at last, a thought came into my head to look for them up in the summer-house.

Bruin. And there you found them?

Sneak. I'll tell you, the door was locked; and then I looked through the key-hole: and, there, Lord a mercy upon us! [*Whispers*] as sure as a gun.

Bruin. Indeed! Zounds, why did not you break open the door?

Sneak. I durst not: what, would you have me set my wit to a soldier? I warrant, the Major would have knocked me down with one of his boots; for I could see they were both of them off.

Brain. Very well! Pretty doings! You see, Sir Jacob, these are the fruits of indulgence: you may call me *bear*, but your daughter shall never make me a beast.

Mob huzzas.

Sir Jac. Hey-day! What, is the election over already?

Enter CRISPIN, &c.

Heel-Tap. Where is master Sneak?

Sneak. Here, Crispin.

Heel-Tap. The ancient Corporation of Garratt, in consideration of your great parts and abilities,

and out of respect to their landlord, Sir Jacob, have unanimously chosen you mayor.

Sneak. Me! huzza! good Lord, who would have thought it? but how come Master Primer to lose it?

Heel-Tap. Why, Phil Fleam had told the electors, that Master Primer was an Irishman; and so they would none of them give their vote for a *foreigner*.

Sneak. So, then, I have it for certain: Huzza! Now, brother Bruin, you shall see how I'll manage my Madam: Gad, I'll make her know I am a man of authority; she sha'n't think to bullock and domineer over me.

Bruin. Now for it, Sneak; the enemy's at hand.

Sneak. You promise to stand by me, brother Bruin.

Bruin. Tooth and nail.

Sneak. Then now for it; I am ready, let her come when she will.

Enter Mrs. SNEAK.

Mrs. Sneak. Where is the puppy?

Sneak. Yes, yes, she is axing for me.

Mrs. Sneak. So, sot; what, is this true that I hear?

Sneak. May be 'tis, may be 'ta'n't: I don't choose to trust my affairs with a voman. Is that right, brother Bruin?

Bruin. Fine! don't bate her an inch.

Sneak. Stand by me.

Mrs. Sneak. Hey-day! I am amazed! Why, what is the meaning of this?

Sneak. The meaning is plain, that I am grown a man, and vil do what I please, without being accountable to nobody.

Mrs. Sneak. Why, the fellow is surely bewitched.

Sneak. No, I am unwitched, and that you shall know to your cost; and since you provoke me, I will tell you a bit of my mind: what, I am the husband, I hope?

Bruin. That's right: at her again.

Sneak. Yes; and you sha'n't think to hector and domineer over me as you have done; for I'll go to the club when I please, and stay out as late as I list, and row in a boat to Putney on Sundays, and wisit my friends at Vitsontide, and keep the key of the till, and help myself at table to vhat vittles I like, and I'll have a bit of the brown.

Bruin. Bravo, brother. Sneak! the day's your own.

Sneak. A'n't it? vhy, I did not think it vas in me; shall I tell her all I know?

Bruin. Every thing; you see she is struck dumb.

Sneak. As an oyster: besides, madam, I have something furder to tell you: ecod, if some folks go into gardens with Majors, mayhap other people may go into garrets with maids.—There, I gave it her home, brother Bruin.

Mrs. Sneak. Why, doodle! jackanapes! hark ye, who am I?

Sneak. Come, don't go to call names: *am I?* vhy my vife, and I am your master.

Mrs. Sneak. My master! you paltry, puddling puppy; you sneaking, shabby, scrubby, snivelling whelp!

Sneak. Brother Bruin, don't let her come near me.

Mrs. Sneak. Have I, sirrah, demeaned myself to wed such a thing, such a reptile as thee? Have

I not made myself a by-word to all my acquaintance! Don't all the world cry, Lord, who would have thought it! Miss Molly Jollup to be married to Sneak! to take up at last with such a noodle as he!

Sneak. Ay, and glad enough you could catch me: you know, you was pretty near your last legs.

Mrs. Sneak. Was there ever such a confident cur? My last legs! Why, all the country knows, I could have pick'd and choos'd where I would: did not I refuse 'Squire Ap-Griffith from Wales? did not Counsellor Crab come a courting a twelvemonth? did not Mr. Wort, the great brewer of Brentford, make an offer that I should keep my post-chay?

Sneak. Nay, brother Bruin, she has had werry good proffers, that is certain.

Mrs. Sneak. My last legs!—but I can rein my passion no longer; let me get at the villain.

Bruin. O fye, sister Sneak.

Sneak. Hold her fast.

Mrs. Sneak. Mr. Bruin, unhand me: what, it is you that have stirred up these coals, then; he is set on by you to abuse me.

Bruin. Not I; I would only have a man behave like a man.

Mrs. Sneak. What, and you are to teach him, I warrant—But here comes the Major.

Enter MAJOR STURGEON.

Oh Major! such a riot and rumpus! *Like a man*, indeed! I wish people would mind their own affairs, and not meddle with matters that does not concern them: but all in good time; I shall one day catch him alone, when he has not his bullies to back him.

Sneak. Adod, that's true, brother Bruin; what shall I do when she has me at home, and nobody by but ourselves?

Bruin. If you get her once under, you may do with her whatever you will.

Major. Look ye, Master Bruin, I don't know how this behaviour may suit with a citizen; but, were you an officer, and Major Sturgeon upon your court-martial—

Bruin. What then?

Major. Then! why then you would be broke.

Bruin. Broke! and for what?

Major. What! read the articles of war: but these things are out of your spear; points of honour are for the sons of the sword.

Sneak. Honour! if you come to that, where was your honour when you got my vife in the garden?

Major. Now, Sir Jacob, this is the curse of our cloth; all suspected for the faults of a few.

Sneak. Ay, and not without reason; I heard of your tricks at the King of Bohemy, when you was campaigning about, I did; father, Sir Jacob, he is as wicious as an old ram.

Major. Stop whilst you are safe, Master Sneak; for the sake of your amiable lady, I pardon what is past—But for you—

Bruin. Well.

Major. Dread the whole force of my fury.

Bruin. Why, look ye, Major Sturgeon, I don't much care for your poppers and sharps, because why, they are out of my way; but if you will doff your boots, and box a couple of bouts——.

Major. Box! box! blades! bullets! Bagshot!

Mrs. Sneak. Not for the world, my dear Ma-

jor! oh, risk not so precious a life. Ungrateful wretches! and is this the reward for all the great feats he has done? After all his marchings, his sousings, his sweatings, his swimmings; must his dear blood be spilt by a broker?

Major. Be satisfied, sweet Mrs. Sneak; these little fracases we soldiers are subject to; trifles, bagatailes, Mrs. Sneak. But, that matters may be conducted in a military manner, I will get our chaplain to pen me a challenge. Expect to hear from my adjutant.

Mrs. Sneak. Major, Sir Jacob; what, are you all leagued against his dear——*A man!* yes, a very manly action, indeed, to set married people a quarrelling, and ferment a difference between husband and wife: if you were a man, you would not stand by and see a poor woman beat and abused by a brute, you would not.

Sneak. Oh Lord, I can hold out no longer! why brother Bruin, you have set her a veeping: my life, my lovey, don't veep; did I ever think I should have made my Molly to weep?

Mrs. Sneak. Last legs! you lubberly—

[*Strikes him.*

Sir Jac. Oh, fie, Molly.

Mrs. Sneak. What, are you leagued against me, Sir Jacob?

Sir Jac. Prithee, don't expose yourself before the whole parish: but what has been the occasion of this?

Mrs. Sneak. Why, has he not gone and made himself the fool of the fair? Mayor of Garratt, indeed! Ecod, I could trample him under my feet.

Sneak. Nay, why should you grudge me my purfarment?

Mrs. Sneak. Did you ever hear such an oaf? why thee wilt be pointed at wherever thee goest: look ye, Jerry, mind what I say; go, get 'em to choose somebody else, or never come near me again.

Sneak. What shall I do, father, Sir Jacob?

Sir Jac. Nay, daughter, you take this thing in too serious a light; my honest neighbours thought to compliment me: but come, we'll settle the business at once. Neighbours, my son Sneak being seldom amongst us, the duty will never be done, so we will get our honest friend Heel-Tap to execute the office; he is, I think, every way qualified.

Mob. A Heel-Tap!

Heel-Tap. What d'ye mean, as Master Jeremy's deputy?

Sir Jac. Ay, ay, his *locum tenens.*

Sneak. Do, Crispin; do be my *locum tenens.*

Heel-Tap, Give me your hand, Master Sneak, and to oblige you I will be the *locum tenens.*

Sir Jac. So, that is settled; but now to heal the other breach: come, Major, the gentlemen of your cloth seldom bear malice; let me interpose between you and my son.

Major. Your son-in-law, Sir Jacob, does deserve a castigation; but, on recollection, a cit would but sully my arms. I forgive him.

Sir Jac. That's right; as a token of amity, and to celebrate our feast, let us call in the fiddles. Now, if the Major had but his shoes, he might join in a country-dance.

Major. Sir Jacob, no shoes, a Major must never be out of his boots; always ready for action. Mrs. Sneak will find me lightsome enough.

Sneak. What, are all the vomen engaged? why,

then, my *locum tenens* and I will jig together. Forget and forgive, Major.

Major. Freely.

Nor be it said, that, after all my toil,
I stain'd my regimentals by a broil.
To you I dedicate boots, sword, and shield,

Sir Jac.

As harmless in the chamber as the field.

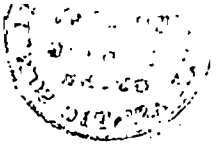
THE

PATRON,

A COMEDY, IN THREE ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.



REMARKS.

ALTHOUGH not so successful on the stage as his other pieces, *the Patron* displays the taste and genius of *Foote* more than any production of his pen before or since. It has, besides, the merit of being *genuine satire*, a quality that was denied to some of his more *personal* hits; but the public would not sanction this chaster attempt of our author, and they withheld the approbation that had been lavished the preceding season on the Fish-salesman, Sturgeon. It came out, at the Haymarket, in 1764, and the hint was ascribed to one of Marmontel's moral tales; but the principal character was a distant copy of *George Doddington*, a silly, rich fool, who, being a twaddling gossip in high life, vain, over-refined, and presuming to dictate in matters of taste and literature, contrived to obtain listeners and correspondents in that class of life, but who despised him whilst they stood in need of his countenance, his parliamentary corruption, or his purse. *Foote*, unhappily for the closeness of the portrait, found himself obliged to

take this obnoxious character at second-hand; for the fellow further contrived to get himself made *a lord* of one of his own rotten boroughs, and thus placed himself out of harm's way: though frequently heard of, he was not *generally known* beyond the *exalted circle* of the INS.

His *Puff* was a publisher, who acknowledges having profited by the pillory, and was, moreover, the vendor of a quack medicine; he had migrated from a Moorfields' stall, got rich, and became arrogant towards his inferiors, and testy with *his authors*—qualities these, which might be found with little variation, any two of them, in numbers of this variety of *trade*, down to our own times.

Dactyls, and the whole herd of parasites, that hover round the *Sir Thomas Lofties* of our day, are every where still to be met with; as are the various mean attempts to obtain literary fame surreptitiously, that we here see portrayed. What, then, prevents this comedy from again appearing on our boards? The antiquarian rage is certainly not cooled, nor the era of dunces at an end; or, if the fact be not fully so, *Bibliomania* might form a very proper *addendum* to the present strokes of humour and of just satire.

"Bucks have at ye all;" the picture of a play-house, an epilogue by Garrick, is full of spirit and truth; and is still a favourite piece with our young aspirants after histrionic fame, who make use of it to fledge their wings at Reciting Clubs, and the "Free and Easy" societies all over the land.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GRANVILLE LEVESON GOWER,

EARL GOWER,

Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's Household.

MY LORD,

THE following little comedy, founded on a story of *M. Marmontel's*, and calculated to expose the frivolity and ignorance of the pretenders to learning, with the insolence and vanity of their superficial, illiberal protectors, can be addressed to no nobleman with more propriety than to *Lord Gower;* whose judgement, though elegant, is void of affectation, and whose patronage, though powerful, is destitute of all fastidious parade. It is with pleasure, my Lord, that the Public sees your Lordship placed at the head of that department which is to decide, without appeal, on the most popular domain in the whole republic of letters; a spot that has always been distinguished with affection, and cultivated with care, by every ruler the least attentive to either chastising [*chastening*] the morals, polishing the manners, or, what is of equal importance, rationally amusing the leisure of the people.

The *Patron*, my Lord, who now begs your protection, has had the good fortune to be well received by the public; and, indeed, of all the

pieces that I have had the honour to offer them, this seems to me to have the fairest claim to their favour.

But the play, stripped of those theatrical ornaments for which it is indebted to your Lordship's indulgence, must now plead its own cause: nor will I, my Lord, with an affected humility, echo the trite, coarse, though classical compliment, of *Optimus patronus pessimus poeta:* for if this be really true of the last, the first can have but small pretensions to praise; patronizing bad poets being, in my poor opinion, full as pernicious to the progress of letters, as neglecting the good.

In humble hopes, then, my Lord, of not being thought the meanest in the Muses' train, I have taken the liberty to prefix your name to this dedication, and publicly to acknowledge my obligations to your Lordship; which, let me boast too, I have had the happiness to receive, untainted by the insolence of domestics, the delays of office, or the chilling superiority of rank; mortifications which have been too often experienced by much greater writers than myself, from much less men than your Lordship.

My Lord, I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect and gratitude,

Your Lordship's most obliged
and most devoted
humble servant,
SAMUEL FOOTE.

West-End, June 20, 1764.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Thomas Lofty Sir Peter Pepperpot	*Mr. Foote.*
Dick Bever	*Mr. Death.*
Frank Younger	*Mr. Davis.*
Sir Roger Dowlas	*Mr. Palmer.*
Mr. Rust	*Mr. Weston.*
Mr. Dactyl	*Mr. Granger.*
Mr. Puff	*Mr. Hayes.*
Mr. Staytape	*Mr. Brown.*
Robin	*Mr. Parsons.*
John	*Mr. Lewis.*
Two Blacks	
Miss Juliet	*Mrs. Granger.*

SCENE—Cavendish Square, and its Vicinity.

THE

PATRON.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE—The Street.

Enter BEVER *and* YOUNGER.

Young. No, Dick, you must pardon me.

Bever. Nay, but to satisfy your curiosity.

Young. I tell you, I have not a jot.

Bever. Why, then, to gratify me.

Young. At rather too great an expense.

Bever. To a fellow of your observation and turn [of mind], I should think now such a scene a most delicate treat.

Young. Delicate! Palling, nauseous, to a dreadful degree. To a lover, indeed, the charms of the niece might palliate the uncle's fulsome formality.

Bever. The uncle! ay, but then you know he is only one of the group.

Young. That's true; but the figures are all finished alike:—*manière*, a tiresome sameness throughout.

Bever. There you will excuse me; I am sure there is no want of variety.

Young. No! then let us have the detail. Come, Dick, give us a bill of the play.

Bever. First, you know, there's Juliet's uncle.

Young. What, *Sir Thomas Lofty!* the modern Midas, or rather (as fifty dedications will tell you) the *Pollio*, the *Atticus*, the patron of genius, the protector of arts, the paragon of poets, decider on merit, chief justice of taste, and sworn appraiser to Apollo and the tuneful Nine. Ha, ha.—Oh, the tedious, insipid, insufferable coxcomb!

Bever. Nay, now, Frank, you are too extravagant. He is universally allowed to have taste; sharp-judging Adriel, the muse's friend, himself a muse.

Young. Taste! by who? underling bards, that he feeds; and broken booksellers, that he bribes. Look ye, Dick, what raptures you please, when Miss Lofty is your theme; but expect no quarter for the rest of the family. I tell thee once for all, Lofty is a rank impostor, the *buffo* of an illiberal, mercenary tribe; he has neither genius to create, judgement to distinguish, or generosity to reward; his wealth has gained him flattery from the indigent, and the haughty insolence of his pretence, admiration from the ignorant. *Voilà le portrait de votre oncle.* Now, on to the next.

Bever. The ingenious and erudite *Mr. Rust.*

Young. What, old Martin, the medal-monger?

Bever. The same, and my rival in Juliet.

Young. Rival! what, Rust? why she's too modern for him by a couple of centuries. Martin! why he likes no heads but upon coins. Married! the mummy! Why 'tis not above a fortnight ago that I saw him making love to the figure without a

nose, in Somerset-gardens: I caught him stroking the marble plaits of her gown, and asked him if he was not ashamed to take such liberties with ladies in public.

Bever. What an inconstant old scoundrel it is!

Young. Oh, a Dorimant. But how came this about? what could occasion the change? was it in the power of flesh and blood to seduce this adorer of *virtù* from his marble and porphyry?

Bever. Juliet has done it; and, what will surprise you, his taste was a bawd to the business.

Young. Prithee explain.

Bever. Juliet met him last week at her uncle's: he was a little pleased with the Greek of her profile; but, on a closer inquiry, he found the turn-up of her nose to exactly resemble the bust of the princess Poppæa.

Young. The chaste moiety of the amiable Nero.

Bever. The same.

Young. Oh, the deuce! then your business was done in an instant.

Bever. Immediately. In favour of the tip, he offered *carte blanche* for the rest of the figure, which (as you may suppose) was instantly caught at.

Young. Doubtless. But who have we here?

Bever. This is one of Lofty's companions, a West-Indian of an over-grown fortune. He saves me the trouble of a portrait. This is Sir Peter Pepperpot.

Enter Sir PETER PEPPERPOT *and two Blacks.*

Sir Peter. Careless scoundrels! hark'ee, rascals! I'll banish you home, you dogs! you shall back, and broil in the sun. Mr. Bever, your humble; Sir, I am your entirely devoted.

Bever. You seem moved; what has been the matter, Sir Peter?

Sir Peter. Matter! why I am invited to dinner on a barbacu, and the villains have forgot my bottle of cayènne.

Young. Unpardonable.

Sir Peter. Ay, this country has spoiled them; this same *christening* will ruin the colonies.—— Well, dear Bever, rare news, boy; our fleet is arrived from the West.

Bever. It is?

Sir Peter. Ay, lad; and a glorious cargo of turtle. It was lucky I went to Brighthelmstone; I nicked the time to a hair; thin as a lath, and a stomach as sharp as a shark's: never was in finer condition for feeding.

Bever. Have you a large importation, Sir Peter?

Sir Peter. Nine; but seven in excellent order: the captain assures me they greatly gained ground on the voyage.

Bever. How do you dispose of them?

Sir Peter. Four to Cornhill, three to Almack's, and the two sickly ones I shall send to my borough in Yorkshire.

Young. Ay; what, have the provincials a relish for turtle?

Sir Peter. Sir, it is amazing how this country improves in turtle and turnpikes; to which (give me leave to say) we, from our part of the world, have not a little contributed. Why, formerly, sir, a brace of bucks, on the mayor's annual day, was thought a pretty moderate blessing. But we, sir, have polished their palates. Why, sir, not the meanest member of my corporation but can distinguish the *pash* from the *pee*.

Young. Indeed!

Sir Peter. Aye, and sever the green from the shell with the skill of the ablest anatomist.

Young. And they are fond of it?

Sir Peter. Oh, that the consumption will tell you. The stated allowance is six pounds to an alderman, and five to each of their wives.

Bever. A plentiful provision.

Sir Peter. But there was never known any waste: the mayor, recorder, and rector, are permitted to eat as much as they please.

Young. The entertainment is pretty expensive.

Sir Peter. Land-carriage and all. But I contrived to smuggle the last that I sent them.

Bever. Smuggle! I don't understand you.

Sir Peter. Why, sir, the rascally coachman had always charged me five pounds for the carriage. Damned dear! Now, my cook going at the same time into the country, I made him clap a *capuchin* upon the turtle,* and for thirty shillings put him an inside passenger in the Doncaster Fly.

Young. A happy expedient.

Bever. Oh, Sir Peter has infinite humour.

Sir Peter. Yes, but the frolick had like to have proved fatal.

Young. How so?

Sir Peter. The maid at the Rummer, at Hatfield, popped her head into the coach to know if the company would like to have any breakfast: Ecod, the turtle, sir, laid hold of her nose, and flapped her face with his fins, till the poor devil fell into a fit. Ha, ha, ha!

Young. Oh, an absolute *Rabelais.*

---

* Capuchin. A cloak, with a hood, which covered the entire person—mostly female.

Bever. What, I reckon, Sir Peter, you are going to the square?

Sir Peter. Yes; I extremely admire Sir Thomas. You know this is his day of assembly; I suppose you will be there; I can tell you, you are a wonderful favourite.

Bever. Am I?

Sir Peter. He says, your natural genius is fine; and, when polished by his cultivation, will surprise and astonish the world.

Bever. I hope, sir, I shall have your voice with the public.

Sir Peter. Mine! O fie, Mr. Bever.

Bever. Come, come, you are no inconsiderable patron.

Sir Peter. He, he, he! Can't say but I love to encourage the arts.

Bever. And have contributed largely yourself.

Young. What, is Sir Peter an author?

Sir Peter. O fie! what me? a mere dabbler; have blotted my fingers, 'tis true:—some sonnets, that have not been thought wanting in *salt.*

Bever. And your epigrams.

Sir Peter. Not entirely without point.

Bever. But come, Sir Peter, the love of the arts is not the sole cause of your visits to the house you are going to.

Sir Peter. I do not understand you.

Bever. Miss Juliet, the niece.

Sir Peter. O fie! what chance have I there? Indeed, if Lady Pepperpot should happen to pop off—

Bever. I don't know that. You are, Sir Peter, a dangerous man; and, were I a father; or uncle, I should not be a little shy of your visits.

Sir Peter. Psha! dear Bever, you banter.

Bever. And (unless I am extremely out in my guess) that lady—

Sir Peter. Hey! What, what, dear Bever?

Bever. But if you should betray me—

Sir Peter. May I never eat a bit of green fat again if I do!

Bever. Hints have been dropped.

Sir Peter. The devil! come a little this way.

Bever. Well made; not robust and gigantic, 'tis true, but extremely genteel.

Sir Peter. Indeed!

Bever. Features, not entirely regular; but marking, with an air now, superior; greatly above the——you understand me?

Sir Peter. Perfectly. Something noble; expressive of——fashion.

Bever. Right.

Sir Peter. Yes, I have been frequently told so.

Bever. Not an absolute wit; but something infinitely better: an *enjouement*, a spirit, a—

Sir Peter. Gaiety. I was ever so from a child.

Bever. In short, your dress, address, with a thousand other particulars, that at present I cannot recollect.

Sir Peter. Why, dear Bever, to tell thee the truth, I have always admired Miss Juliet; and a delicate creature she is; sweet as a sugar-cane, straight as a bamboo, and her teeth as white as a negro's.

Bever. Poetic, but true. Now, only conceive, Sir Peter, such a plantation of perfections to be devoured by that caterpillar, Rust.

Sir Peter. A liquorish grub! Are pine-apples for such muckworms as he? I'll send him a jar of citrons and ginger, and poison the pipkin.

Bever. No, no.

Sir Peter. Or, invite him to dinner, and mix rat's bane along with his *curry*.

Bever. Not so precipitate; I think we may defeat him without any danger.

Sir Peter. How, how?

Bever. I have a thought—but we must settle the plan with the lady. Could not you give her the hint, that I should be glad to see her a moment?

Sir Peter. I'll do it directly.

Bever. But don't let Sir Thomas perceive you.

Sir Peter. Never fear. You'll follow?

Bever. The instant I have settled matters with her; but fix the old fellow so that she may not be missed.

Sir Peter. I'll nail him, I warrant; I have his opinion to beg on this manuscript.

Bever. Your own?

Sir Peter. No.

Bever. Oh, ho! what something new from the doctor, your chaplain?

Sir Peter. He! no, no. O Lord, he's cloped.

Bever. How?

Sir Peter. Gone. You know he was to dedicate his volume of fables to me: so I gave him thirty pounds to get my arms engraved, to prefix (by way of print) to the frontispiece:* and, O grief of griefs! the doctor has moved off with the money. I'll send you Miss Juliet. [*Exit.*

Bever. There, now, is a special protector! The

---

* At this period the title-page of a book was (rightly) considered *the frontispiece;* now, however, they have transferred that name to the picture which faces the first page or piece.

arts, I think, can't but flourish under such a *Macænas*.

Young. Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool.

Bever. True; but then, to justify the dispensation,

> From hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed,
> Fortunes to booksellers, to authors bread.

Young. The distribution is, I own, a little unequal: and here comes a most melancholy instance; poor Dick Dactyl, and his publisher Puff.

Enter DACTYL *and* PUFF.

Puff. Why, then, Mr. Dactyl, carry them to somebody else; there are people enough in the trade: but I wonder you would meddle with poetry; you know it rarely pays for the paper.

Dac. And how can one help it, Mr. Puff? Genius impels, and when a man is once listed in the service of the Muses—

Puff. Why, let him give them warning as soon as he can. A pretty sort of service, indeed! where there are neither wages nor vails. The Muses! And what, I suppose this is the livery they give. Gadzooks, I had rather be a waiter at Ranelagh.

Bever. The poet and publisher at variance! What is the matter, Mr. Dactyl?

Dac. As Gad shall judge me, Mr. Bever, as pretty a poem, and so polite; not a mortal can take any offence; all full of penegyric and praise.

Puff. A fine character he gives of his works. No offence! the greatest in the world, Mr. Dactyl. Panegyric and praise! and what will that do with the public? Why, who the devil will give money to be told that Mr. Such-a-one is a wiser or better

man than himself? No, no; 'tis quite and clean out of nature. A good sousing satire now, well powdered with personal pepper, and seasoned with the spirit of party; that demolishes a conspicuous character, and sinks him below our own level; there, there, we are pleased; there we chuckle, and grin, and toss the half-crowns on the counter.

Duc. Yes, and so get *cropped* for a libel.

Puff. *Cropped!* aye, and the luckiest thing that can happen to you. Why I would not give two-pence for an author that is afraid of his ears. Writing, writing is, (as I may say,) Mr. Dactyl, a sort of warfare, where none can be victor that is the least afraid of a scar. Why, 'zooks, sir, I never got salt to my porridge till I *mounted* at the Royal Exchange.*

Bever. Indeed!

Puff. No, no; that was the making of me. Then my name made a noise in the world. Talk of forked hills, and of Helicon! romantic and fabulous stuff. The true Castalian stream is a shower of eggs, and a pillory the poet's Parnassus.

Duc. Ay, to you indeed it may answer; but what do *we* get for our pains?

Puff. Why, what the deuce would you get? food, fire, and fame. Why, you would not grow fat? a corpulent poet is a monster, a prodigy! No, no; spare diet is a spur to *the fancy;* high feeding would but founder your Pegasus.

---

* *Mounted—cropped.*] Many publishers sought persecution, and were honoured with the pillory, with imprisonment, publicity, and subscriptions, or a niche in the Annual Register. This authority, though sufficiently minute in its accounts, is silent as to cropping the ears of libellers.

Dac. Why, you impudent, illiterate rascal! who is it you dare treat in this manner?

Puff. Heydey! what is the matter now?

Dac. And is this the return for all the obligations you owe me? But no matter! the world, the world shall know what you are, and how you have used me.

Puff. Do your worst; I despise you.

Dac. They shall be told from what a dunghill you sprang. Gentlemen, if there be faith in a sinner, that fellow owes every shilling to me.

Puff. To thee!

Dac. Ay, sirrah, to me. In what kind of way did I find you? Then, where and what was your state? Gentlemen, his shop was a shed in Moorfields; his kitchen, a broken pipkin of charcoal; and his bed-chamber, under the counter.

Puff. I never was fond of expense; I ever minded my trade.

Dac. Your trade! and pray with what stock did you trade? I can give you the catalogue; I believe it will not overburden my memory. Two odd volumes of Swift; the Life of Moll Flanders, with cuts; the Five Senses, printed and coloured by Overton; a few classics, thumbed and blotted by the boys of the Charterhouse; with the Trial of Dr. Sacheverel.

Puff. Malice.

Dac. Then, sirrah, I gave you my *Canning*; it was she first set you afloat.

Puff. A grub.

Dac. And it is not only my writings: you know, sirrah, what you owe to my physick.

Bever. How! a physician?

Dac. Yes, Mr. Bever; physick and poetry.

Apollo is the patron of both: *Opiferque per orbem dicor.*

Puff. His physick?

Dac. My physick! ay, my physick: why, dare you deny it, you rascal? What, have you forgot my powders for flatulent crudities?

Puff. No.

Dac. My cosmetic lozenge, and sugar-plumbs?

Puff. No.

Dac. My coral for cutting of teeth, my potions, my lotions, my pregnancy-drops, with my paste for superfluous hairs?

Puff. No, no; have you done?

Dac. No, no, no; but I believe this will suffice for the present.

Puff. Now, would not any mortal believe, that I owed my all to this fellow.

Bever. Why, indeed, Mr. Puff, the balance does seem in his favour.

Puff. In his favour! why you don't give any credit to him! a reptile, a bug, that owes his very being to me.

Dac. I, I, I.

Puff. You, you! What, I suppose, you forget your garret in Wine-office-court, when you furnished paragraphs for the Farthing-post at twelve-pence a dozen.

Dac. Fiction.

Puff. Then, did not I get you made collector of casualties to the Whitehall and St. James's? but that post your laziness lost you. Gentlemen, he never brought them a robbery till the highwayman was going to be hanged; a birth till the christening was over; nor a death till the hatchment was up.

Dac. Mighty well!

Puff. And now, because the fellow has got a little in flesh, by being puff to the playhouse this winter, (to which, by-the-by, I got him appointed,) he is as proud and as vain as Voltaire. But I shall soon have him under; the vacation will come.

Dac. Let it.

Puff. Then I shall have him sneaking and cringing, hanging about me, and begging a bit of translation.

Dac. I beg, I, for translation!

Puff. No, no, not a line; not if you would do it for two-pence a sheet. No boiled beef and carrot at mornings; no more cold pudding and porter. You may take your leave of my shop.

Dac. Your shop! then, at parting I will leave you a legacy.

Bever. O fie, Mr. Dactyl!

Puff. Let him alone.

Dac. Pray, gentlemen, let me do myself justice.

Bever. Younger, restrain the publisher's fire.

Young. Fye, gentlemen, such an illiberal combat—it is a scandal to the republic of letters.

Bever. Mr. Dactyl, an old man, a mechanic, beneath—

Dac. Sir, I am calm; that thought has restored me. To your insignificancy you are indebted for safety. But what my generosity has saved, my pen shall destroy.

Puff. Then you must get somebody to mend it.

Dac. Adieu!

Puff. Farewell! [*Exeunt severally.*

Bever. Ha, ha, ha! come, let us along to the square.

Blockheads with reason wicked wits abhor,
But dunce with dunce is barb'rous civil war.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE continues.

Enter BEVER *and* YOUNGER.

Young. Poor Dactyl! and "dwells such mighty rage in little men?" I hope there is no danger of bloodshed.

Bever. Oh, not in the least; the *gens vatum*, the nation of poets, though an irritable, are yet a placable people. Their mutual interests will soon bring them together again.

Young. But shall not we be late? The critical senate is by this time assembled.

Bever. I warrant you, frequent and full; where

> Stately Buffo, puff'd by every quill,
> Sits, like Apollo, on his forked hill.

But you know I must wait for Miss Lofty; I am now totally directed by her. She gives me the key to all Sir Thomas's foibles, and prescribes the most proper method to feed them; but, what good purpose that will produce—

Young. Is she clever, adroit?

Bever. Doubtless. I like [the idea of] your asking the question of me.

Young. Then pay her implicit obedience: the ladies, in these cases, generally know what they are about. The door opens.

Bever. It is Juliet, and with her old Rust. Enter, Frank: you know the knight, so no introduction is wanted. [*Exit* YOUNGER.] I should be glad to hear this reverend piece of lumber make love; the courtship must certainly be curious.

Good-manners, stand by; by your leave I will listen a little. [BEVER *retires.*]

Enter JULIET *and* RUST.

Jul. And your collection is large?

Rust. Most curious and capital. When, madam, will you give me leave to add your charms to my catalogue?

Jul. O dear! Mr. Rust, I shall but disgrace it. Besides, Sir, when I marry, I am resolved to have my husband all to myself: now, for the possession of your heart I shall have too many competitors.

Rust. How, madam! were Prometheus alive, and would animate the Helen that stands in my hall, she should not cost me a sigh.

Jul. Ay, sir, there lies my greatest misfortune. Had I only those who are alive to contend with, by assiduity, affection, cares, and caresses, I might secure my conquest: though that would be difficult; for I am convinced, were you, Mr. Rust, put up by *Prestage* to auction, the Apollo Belvidere would not draw a greater number of bidders.

Rust. Would that were the case, madam, so I might be thought a proper companion to the Venus de Medicis.

Jul. The flower of rhetoric, and pink of politeness. But my fears are not confined to the living; for every nation and age, even painters and statuaries, conspire against me. Nay, when the Pantheon itself, the very goddesses rise up as my rivals, what chance has a mortal like me?——I shall certainly laugh in his face. [*Aside.*]

Rust. She is a delicate subject——Goddesses,

madam; zooks, had you been on Mount Ida when Paris decided the contest, the Cyprian queen had pleaded for the pippin in vain.

Jul. Extravagant gallantry.

Rust. In you, madam, are concentred all the beauties of the Heathen mythology: the open front of Diana, the lustre of Pallas's eyes,—

Jul. Oh, sir!

Rust. The chromatic music of Clio, the blooming graces of Hebè, the *empyreal* port of queen Juno, with the delicate dimples of Venus.

Jul. I see, sir, antiquity has not engrossed all your attention: you are no novice in the nature of women. Incense, I own, is grateful to most of my sex; but there are times when adoration may be dispensed with.

Rust. Madam!

Jul. I say, sir, when we women willingly wave our rank in the skies, and wish to be treated as mortals——

Rust. Doubtless, madam; and are you wanting in materials for that? No, madam; as in dignity you surpass the Heathen divinities, so, in the charms of attraction, you beggar the queens of the earth. The whole world, at different periods, has contributed its several beauties to form you.

Jul. The deuce it has! [*Aside.*]

Rust. See, there, the ripe Asiatic perfection, joined to the delicate softness of Europe! In you, madam, I burn to possess Cleopatra's alluring glances, the Greek profile of queen Clytemnestra, the Roman nose of the empress Poppæa—

Jul. With the majestic march of Queen Bess. Mercy on me, what a wonderful creature am I!

Rust. In short, madam, not a feature you have,

but recals to my mind some trait in a medal or bust.

Jul. Indeed! Why, by your account, I must be an absolute olio, a perfect salmagundy of charms.

Rust. Oh, madam, how can you demean, as I may say, undervalue—

Jul. Value! there is the thing; and to tell you the truth, Mr. Rust, in that word value lies my greatest objection.

Rust. I don't understand you.

Jul. Why then, I will explain myself. It has been said, and I believe with some shadow of truth, that no man is a hero to his *valet de chambre:* now, I am afraid, when you and I grow a little more intimate, which I suppose must be the case if you proceed on your plan, you will be horribly disappointed in your high expectations, and soon discover this Juno, this Cleopatra, and princess Poppæa, to be as arrant a mortal as madam, your mother.

Rust. Madam, I, I, I—

Jul. Your patience a moment. Being, therefore, desirous to preserve your devotion, I beg for the future, you would please to adore at a distance.

Rust. To Endymion, madam, Luna once listened.

Jul. Ay, but he was another kind of a mortal; you may do very well as a votary; but, for a husband—mercy on me!

Rust. Madam, you are not in earnest, not serious!

Jul. Not serious! Why, have you the impudence to think of marrying a goddess?

Rust. I should hope—

Jul. And what should you hope? I find your devotion resembles that of the world: when the power of sinning is over, and the sprightly, first-runnings of life are racked off, you offer the vapid drugs to your deity. No, no; you may, if you please, turn monk in my service. One vow, I believe, you will observe better than most of them, chastity.

Rust. Permit me—

Jul. Or, if you must marry, take your Julia, your Portia, or Flora, your Fum-fam from China, or your Egyptian Osiris. You have long paid your addresses to them.

Rust. Marry! what, marble?

Jul. The properest wives in the world; you cannot choose amiss; they will supply you with all you want.

Rust. Your uncle has, madam, consented.

Jul. That is more than ever his niece will. Consented! and to what? to be swathed to a mouldering mummy; or be locked up, like your medals, to canker and rust in a cabinet! No, no; I was made for the world, and the world shall not be robbed of its right.

Bever. Bravo, Juliet! Gad, she's a fine spirited girl.

Jul. My *profile*, indeed! No, sir, when I marry, I must have a man that will meet my full face.

Rust. Might I be heard for a moment?

Jul. To what end? You say, you have Sir Thomas Lofty's consent; I tell you, you can never have mine. You may screen me from, or expose me to, my uncle's resentment; the choice is

your own: if you lay the fault at my door, you will, doubtless, greatly distress me; but take the blame on yourself, and I shall own myself extremely obliged to you.

Rust. How! confess myself in fault?

Jul. Ay; for the best thing a man can do, when he finds he cannot be beloved, is to take care he is not heartily hated. There is no other alternative.

Rust. Madam, I will not break my word with Sir Thomas.

Jul. Nor I with myself. So there's an end of our conference. Sir, your very obedient.

Rust. Madam, I, I, don't—that is, let me—But no matter. Your servant. [*Exit.*

Jul. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter BEVER, *from behind.*

Bever. Ha, ha, ha! Incomparable Juliet! How the old dotard trembled and tottered; he could not have been more inflamed had he been robbed of his Otho.

Jul. Ay, was ever goddess so familiarly used? On my conscience, I began to be afraid he would treat me as the Indians do their dirty divinities; whenever they are deaf to their prayers, they beat and abuse them.

Bever. But, after all, we are in an awkward situation.

Jul. How so?

Bever. I have my fears.

Jul. So have not I.

Bever. Your uncle has resolved that you should be married to Rust.

Jul. Ay, he may decree; but it is I that must execute.

Bever. But suppose he has given his word.

Jul. Why then, let him recal it again...

Bever. But are you sure you shall have courage enough ——

Jul. To say No? That requires much resolution, indeed.

Bever. Then, I am at the height of my hopes.

Jul. Your hopes! Your hopes and your fears are ill-founded alike.

Bever. Why, you are determined not to be his.

Jul. Well, and what then?

Bever. What then! why, then you will be mine.

Jul. Indeed! and is that the natural consequence? Whoever wo'n't be his, must be yours. Is that the logic of Oxford.

Bever. Madam, I did flatter myself—

Jul. Then you did very wrong indeed, Mr. Bever: you should ever guard against flattering yourself: for of all dangerous parasites, self is the worst.

Bever. I am astonished!

Jul. Astonished! you are mad, I believe! Why, I have not known you a month. It is true, my uncle says your father is his friend; your fortune, in time, will be easy; your figure is not remarkably faulty; and as to your understanding, passable enough for a young fellow who has not seen much of the world: but when one talks of a husband—Lord, it's quite another sort of a—Ha, ha, ha! Poor Bever, how he stares! he stands like a statue!

Bever. Statue indeed, madam; I am very near petrified.

Jul. Even then you will make as good a husband as Rust. But go, run, and join the assembly within: be attentive to every word, motion, and

look of my uncle's; be dumb when he speaks, admire all he says, laugh when he smirks, bow when he sneezes; in short, fawn, flatter, and cringe; don't be afraid of over-loading his stomach, for the knight has a noble digestion, and you will find some there who will keep you in countenance.

Bever. I fly. So then, Juliet, your intention was only to try—

Jul. Don't plague me with impertinent questions: march, obey my directions. We must leave the issue to Chance; a greater friend to mankind than they are willing to own.—Oh, if any thing new should occur, you may come into the drawing-room for further instructions.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE—A Room in Sir Thomas Lofty's House.

SIR THOMAS, RUST, PUFF, DACTYL, *and others, discovered sitting.*

Sir Tho. Nothing new to-day from Parnassus?

Dac. Not that I hear.

Sir Tho. Nothing critical, philosophical, or political?

Puff. Nothing.

Sir Tho. Then, in this *dissette*, this dearth of invention, give me leave, gentlemen, to distribute my stores. I have here in my hand a little smart satirical epigram; new, and prettily pointed: in short, a production that Martial himself would not have blushed to acknowledge.

Rust. Your own, Sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. O fye! no; sent me this morning, anonymously.

Dac. Pray, Sir Thomas, let us have it.

All. By all means; by all means.

Sir Tho.

To Phillis.

Think'st thou, fond Phillis, Strephon told thee true?
Angels are painted fair to look like you:
Another story all the town will tell;
Phillis paints fair—to look like an an-gel.

All. Fine! fine! very fine!

Dac. Such an [*so much*] ease and simplicity.

Puff. The *turn* so unexpected and quick.

Rust. The satire so poignant.

Sir Tho. Yes; I think it possesses, in an eminent degree, the three great epigrammatical requisites; brevity, familiarity, and severity.

Phillis paints fair—to look like an an-gel.

Dac. Happy! Is the Phillis, the subject, a secret?

Sir Tho. Oh, dear me! nothing personal; no; an impromptu; a mere *jeu d'esprit.*

Puff. Then, Sir Thomas, the secret is out; it is your own.

Dac. That was obvious enough.

Puff. Who is there else could have wrote it?

Rust. True, true.

Sir Tho. The name of the author is needless. So it is an acquisition to the republic of letters, any gentleman may claim the merit that will.

Puff. What a noble contempt!

Dac. What greatness of mind!

Rust. Scipio and Lælius were the Roman Loftys. Why, I dare believe Sir Thomas has been the making of half the authors in town; he is, as I may say, the great manufacturer; the other poets are but pedlars, that live by retailing his wares.

All. Ha, ha, ha! well observed, Mr. Rust.

Sir Tho. Ha, ha, ha! *Molle atque facetum.* Why, to pursue the metaphor, if Sir Thomas Lofty were to call in his poetical debts, I believe there would be a good many bankrupts in the Muse's Gazette.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Tho. But, *à propos*, gentlemen; with regard to the eclipse: you found my calculation exact?

Dac. To a *digit.*

Sir Tho. Total darkness, indeed! and birds going to roost! Those philomaths, those almanack makers, are the most ignorant rascals—

Puff. It is amazing where Sir Thomas Lofty stores all his knowledge.

Dac. It is wonderful how the mind of man can contain it.

Sir Tho. Why, to tell you the truth, that circumstance has a good deal engaged my attention; and I believe you will admit my method of solving the phenomenon philosophical and ingenious enough.

Puff. Without question.

All. Doubtless.

Sir Tho. I suppose, gentlemen, my memory, or mind, to be a chest of drawers, a kind of bureau; where, in separate cellules, my different knowledge on different subjects is stored.*

Rust. A prodigious discovery!

All. Amazing!

Sir Tho. To this cabinet, *volition*, or will, has a key; so, when an arduous subject occurs, I un-

* The phrenologists of our day are half a century behind, though treading accurately in the footsteps of Foote.

lock my bureau, pull out the particular drawer, and am supplied with what I want in an instant.

Dac. A Malebranche!

Puff. A Boyle!

All. A Locke!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Bever. [*Exit.*

Sir Tho. A young gentleman from Oxford, recommended to my care by his father. The university has given him a good solid Tuscan foundation; and when he has received from you a few Doric touches, the Ionic and Corinthian graces, I make no doubt but he will prove a Composite pillar to the republic of letters. [*Enter* BEVER.] This, sir, is the school from whence so many capital masters have issued; the river that enriches the regions of science.

Dac. Of which river, Sir Thomas, you are the source: here we quaff; *et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.*

Sir Tho. Purpureo! Delicate, indeed! Mr. Dactyl. 'Do you hear, Mr. Bever! *Bibimus ore nectar.* You, young gentleman, must be instructed to quote; nothing gives a period more spirit than a happy Latin quotation, nor has, indeed, a finer effect at the head of an essay. Poor Dick Steele! I have obliged him with many a motto for his fugitive pieces.

Puff. Ay, and with the contents too; or Sir Richard is foully belied.

Sev. Sir Roger Dowlas.

Enter SERVANT.

Sir Tho. Pray desire him to enter. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Sir Roger, gentlemen, is a considerable

East-India proprietor, and seems desirous of collecting from this learned assembly some rhetorical flowers, which he hopes to strew, with honour to himself, and advantage to the company, at Merchant-Tailors' Hall. [*Enter* SIR ROGER DOWLAS.] Sir Roger, be seated. This gentleman has, in common with the greatest orator the world ever saw, a small natural infirmity; he stutters a little: but I have prescribed the same remedy that Demosthenes used, and don't despair of a radical cure. Well, sir, have you digested those general rules?

Sir Rog. Pr—ett—y well, I am obli—ged to you, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Have you been regular in taking your tincture of sage, to give you confidence for speaking in public?

Sir Rog. Y—es, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Did you open at the last general court?

Sir Rog. I attem—p—ted four or fi—ve times.

Sir Tho. What hindered your progress?

Sir Rog. The pe—b—bles.

Sir Tho. Oh, the pebbles in his mouth. But they are only put in to practise in private; you should take them out when you are addressing the public.

Sir Roger. Yes; I will for the fu—ture.

Sir Tho. Well, Mr. Rust, you had a *tête-à-tête* with my niece. *A-propos*, Mr. Bever, here offers a fine occasion for you; we shall take the liberty to trouble your Muse on their nuptials. O Love! O Hymen! here prune thy purple wings; trim thy bright torch. Hey, Mr. Bever?—

Bev. My talents are at Sir Thomas Lofty's

direction; though I must despair of producing any performance worthy the attention of so complete a judge of the elegant arts.

Sir Tho. Too modest, good Mr. Bever. Well, Mr. Rust, any new acquisition, since our last meeting, to your matchless collection?

Rust. Why, Sir Thomas, I have both lost and gained since I saw you.

Sir Tho. Lost! I am sorry for that.

Rust. The curious sarcophagus, that was sent me from Naples by Signior Belloni—

Sir Tho. You mean the urn that was supposed to contain the dust of Agrippina!

Rust. Supposed! no doubt but it did.

Sir Tho. I hope no sinister accident to that inestimable relic of Rome.

Rust. It's gone.

Sir Tho. Gone! oh, illiberal! What, stolen, I suppose, by some connoisseur?

Rust. Worse, worse! a prey, a martyr to ignorance: a housemaid, that I hired last week, mistook it for a broken green chamber-pot, and sent it away in the dust-cart.

Sir Tho. She merits impaling. Oh, the Hun!

Dac. The Vandal!

All. The Visigoth!

Rust. But I have this day acquired a treasure that will, in some measure, make me amends.

Sir Tho Indeed! what can that be?

Puff. That must be something curious, indeed.

Rust. It has cost me infinite trouble to get it.

Dac. Great rarities are not had without pains.

Rust. It is three months ago since I got the first scent of it, and I have been ever since on the hunt; but all to no purpose.

Sir Tho. I am quite upon thorns till I see it.

Rust. And yesterday, when I had given it over, when all my hopes were grown desperate, it fell into my hands, by the most unexpected and wonderful accident.

Sir Tho.

"Quod optanti divum promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro."

Mr. Bever, you mark my quotation?

Bev. Most happy. Oh, sir, nothing you say can be lost.

Rust. I have brought it here in my pocket; I am no churl; I love to pleasure my friends.

Sir Tho. You are, Mr. Rust, extremely obliging.

All. Very kind, very obliging indeed.

Rust. It was not much hurt by the fire.

Sir Tho. Very fortunate.

Rust. The edges are soiled by the link; but many of the letters are exceedingly legible.

Sir Rog. A li—ttle roo—m, if you p—lease.

Rust. Here it is; the precious remains of the very *North Briton* that was burnt at the Royal Exchange.

Sir Tho. Number forty-five?

Rust. The same.

Bev. You are a lucky man, Mr. Rust.

Rust. I think so. But, Gentlemen, I hope I need not give you a caution: hush—silence—no words on this matter.

Dac. You may depend upon us.

Rust. For, as the paper has not suffered the law, I don't know whether they may not seize it again.

Sir Tho. With us you are safe, Mr. Rust. Well, young gentleman, you see we cultivate all branches of science.

Bever. Amazing, indeed! But when we consider you, Sir Thomas, as the directing, the ruling planet, our wonder subsides in an instant. Science first saw the day with Socrates in the Attic portico; her early years were spent with Tully in the Tusculan shade; but her ripe, maturer hours, she enjoys with Sir Thomas Lofty, near Cavendish-square.

Sir Tho. The most classical compliment I ever received. Gentlemen, a philosophical repast attends your acceptance within. Sir Roger, you'll lead the way. [*Exeunt* all but SIR THOMAS *and* BEVER.] Mr. Bever, may I beg your ear for a moment? Mr. Bever, the friendship I had for your father secured you at first a gracious reception from me: but what I then paid to an old obligation, is now, sir, due to your own particular merit.

Bever. I am happy, Sir Thomas, if—

Sir Tho. Your patience. There is in you, Mr. Bever, a fire of imagination, a quickness of apprehension, a solidity of judgement, joined to a depth of discretion, that I never yet met with in any subject at your time of life.

Bever. I hope I shall never forfeit—

Sir Tho. I am sure you never will; and to give you a convincing proof that I think so, I am now going to trust you with the most important secret of my whole life.

Bever. Your confidence does me great honour.

Sir Tho. But this must be on a certain condition.

Bever. Name it.

Sir Tho. That you give me your solemn promise to comply with one request I shall make you.

Bever. There is nothing Sir Thomas Lofty can ask, that I shall not cheerfully grant.

Sir Tho. Nay, in fact it will be serving yourself.

Bever. I want no such inducement.

Sir Tho. Enough. But we cannot be too private. [*Shuts the door.*] Sit you down. Your Christian name, I think is—

Bever. Richard.

Sir Tho. True; the same as your father's. Come, let us be familiar. It is, I think, dear Dick, acknowledged, that the English have reached the highest pitch of perfection in every department of writing but one—the dramatic.

Bever. Why, the French critics are a little severe.

Sir Tho. And with reason. Now, to rescue our credit, and at the same time give my country model, [*shows a manuscript*] see here.

Bever. A play?

Sir Tho. A *chef d'œuvre*.

Bever. Your own?

Sir Tho. Speak lower. I am the author.

Bever. Nay, then there can be no doubt of its merit.

Sir Tho. I think not. You will be charmed with the subject.

Bever. What is it, Sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. I shall surprise you. The story of *Robinson Crusoe*.* Are not you struck?

Bever. Most prodigiously.

* Though destined to be damned in the present instance, the story of Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday got dramatised about twenty years after, as a musical pantomime, and that with a good share of success. R. B. Sheridan was equally unlucky with Sir T. Lofty in procuring a *Bever*.

Sir Tho. Yes; I knew the very title would hit you. You will find the whole fable is finely conducted, and the character of Friday, *qualis ab incepto*, nobly supported throughout.

Bever. A pretty difficult task.

Sir Tho. True; that was not a bow for a boy. The piece has long been in rehearsal at Drury-lane playhouse, and is this night to make its appearance.

Bever. To-night?

Sir Tho. This night.

Bever. I will attend, and engage all my friends to support it.

Sir Tho. That is not my purpose; the piece will want no such assistance.

Bever. I beg pardon.

Sir Tho. The manager of that house (who, you know, is a writer himself) finding all the anonymous things he produced (indeed some of them wretched enough, and very unworthy of him) placed to his account by the public, is determined to exhibit no more without knowing the name of the author.

Bever. A reasonable caution.

Sir Tho. Now, upon my promise (for I appear to patronize the play) to announce the author before the curtain draws up, Robinson Crusoe is advertised for this evening.

Bever. Oh, then, you will acknowledge the piece to be yours?

Sir Tho. No.

Bever. How then?

Sir Tho. My design is to give it to you.

Bever. To me!

Sir Tho. To you.

Bever. What, me the author of *Robinson Crusoe!*

Sir Tho. Ay,

Bever. Lord, Sir Thomas, it will never gain credit: so complete a production the work of a stripling! Besides, sir, as the merit is yours, why rob yourself of the glory?

Sir Tho. I am entirely indifferent to that.

Bever. Then, why take the trouble?

Sir Tho. My fondness for letters, and love of my country. Besides, dear Dick, though the *pauci et selecti*, the chosen few, know the full value of a performance like this, yet the ignorant, the profane, (by much the majority,) will be apt to think it an occupation ill suited to my time of life.

Bever. Their censure is praise.

Sir Tho. Doubtless. But, indeed, my principal motive is my friendship for you. You are now a canditate for literary honours, and I am determined to fix your fame on an immovable basis.

Bever. You are most excessively kind; but there is something so disingenuous in stealing reputation from another man—

Sir Tho. Idle punctilio!

Bever. It puts me so in mind of the daw in the fable—

Sir Tho. Come, come, dear Dick, I wo'n't suffer your modesty to murder your fame. But the company will suspect something; we will join them, and proclaim you the author. There, keep the copy; to you I consign it for ever; it shall be a secret to latest posterity. You will be smothered with praise by our friends; they shall all go in their bark to the playhouse, and there,

Attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE—continues.

Enter BEVER, *reading.*

So ends the first act. Come, now for the second. "Act the second, showing"—the coxcomb has prefaced every act with an argument, too, in humble imitation, I warrant, of Monsr. Diderot—"showing the fatal effects of disobedience to parents;" with, I suppose, the diverting scene of a gibbet; an entertaining subject for comedy. And the blockhead is as prolix—every scene as long as a homily. Let's see; how does this end? "Exit Crusoe, and enter some savages, dancing a saraband." There's no bearing this abominable trash. [*Enter* JULIET.] So, madam; thanks to your advice and direction, I am got into a fine situation.

Jul. What is the matter now, Mr. Bever?

Bever. The Robinson Crusoe.

Jul. Oh, the play that is to be acted to night! How secret you were! Who in the world would have guessed you was the author?

Bever. Me, madam!

Jul. Your title is odd; but, to a genius, every subject is good.

Bever. You are inclined to be pleasant.

Jul. Within, they have been all prodigious loud in the praise of your piece; but I think my uncle rather more eager than any.

Bev. He has reason; for fatherly fondness goes far.

Jul. I don't understand you.

Bever. You don't!

Jul. No.

Bev. Nay, Juliet, this is too much; you know it is none of my play.

Jul. Whose then?

Bev. Your uncle's.

Jul. My uncle's! then how, in the name of wonder, came you to adopt it?

Bev. At his earnest request. I may be a fool; but remember, madam, you are the cause.

Jul. This is strange; but I can't conceive what his motive could be.

Bev. His motive is obvious enough; to screen himself from the infamy of being the author.

Jul. What, is it bad, then?

Bev. Bad! most infernal!

Jul. And you have consented to own it?

Bev. Why, what could I do? he in a manner compelled me.

Jul. I am extremely glad of it.

Bev. Glad of it! why, I tell you 'tis the most dull, tedious, melancholy—

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. The most flat piece of frippery that ever Grub-street produced.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. It will be damned before the third act.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. And I shall be hooted and pointed at wherever I go.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. So much the better! zounds! so I suppose you would say if I was going to be hanged. Do you call this a mark of your friendship?

Jul. Ah, Bever, Bever! you are a miserable

politician. Do you know, now, that this is the luckiest incident that ever occurred?

Bever. Indeed!

Jul. It could not have been better laid, had we planned it ourselves.

Bever. You will pardon my want of conception: but these are riddles—

Jul. That at present I have not time to explain. But what makes you loitering here? Past six o'clock, as I live! Why, your play is begun; run, run to the house. Was ever author so little anxious for the fate of his piece?

Bever. My piece!

Jul. Sir Thomas! I know by his walk. Fly, and pray all the way for the fall of your play. And, do you hear, if you find the audience too indulgent, inclined to be milky, rather than fail, squeeze in a little acid yourself. Oh, Mr. Bever, at your return, let me see you, before you go to my uncle; that is, if you have the good luck to be damned.

Bever. You need not doubt that.

[*Exit.*

Enter SIR THOMAS LOFTY.

Sir Tho. So, Juliet; was not that Mr. Bever?

Jul. Yes, sir.

Sir Tho. He is rather tardy; by this time his cause is come on, and how is the young gentleman affected? for this is a trying occasion.

Jul. He seems pretty certain, sir.

Sir Tho. Indeed, I think he has very little reason for fear: I confess I admire the piece; and feel as much for its fate as if the work was my own.

Jul. That I most sincerely believe. I wonder, sir, you did not choose to be present.

Sir Tho. Better not. My affections are strong, Juliet, and my nerves but tenderly strung; however, intelligent people are planted, who will bring me, every act, a faithful account of the process.

Jul. That will answer your purpose as well.

Sir Tho. Indeed, I am passionately fond of the arts, and therefore can't help—did not somebody knock? no. My good girl, will you step and take care that when any body comes, the servants may not be out of the way. [*Exit* JULIET.] Five and thirty minutes past six; by this time the first act must be over: John will be presently here. I think it can't fail; yet there is so much whim and caprice in the public opinion, that—This young man is unknown; they'll give him no credit. I had better have owned it myself: reputation goes a great way in these matters: people are afraid to find fault; they are cautious in censuring the works of a man who—hush! that's he; no; 'tis only the shutters. After all, I think I have chosen the best way; for, if it succeeds to the degree I expect, it will be easy to circulate the real name of the author; if it fails, I am concealed—my fame suffers—no—There he is. [*Loud knocking.*] I can't conceive what kept him so long. [*Enter* JOHN.] So, John; well; and—but you have been a monstrous while.

John. Sir, I was wedged so close in the pit, that I could scarcely get out.

Sir Tho. The house was full then?

John. As an egg, sir.

Sir Tho. That's right. Well then, and did matters go swimmingly? hey?

John. Exceedingly well, sir.

Sir Tho. Exceedingly well. I do not doubt it. What, vast clapping and roars of applause, I suppose!

John. Very well, sir.

Sir Tho. Very well, sir! You are damned costive, I think. But did not the pit and boxes thunder again?

John. I can't say there was over-much *thunder.*

Sir Tho. No! Oh, attentive, I reckon. Aye, attention! that is the true, solid, substantial applause. All else may be purchased; hands move as they are bid: but when the audience is hushed still, afraid of losing a word, then—

John. Yes, they were very quiet indeed, sir.

Sir Tho. I like them the better, John; a strong mark of their great sensibility. Did you see Robin?

John. Yes, sir; he'll be here in a trice; I left him listening at the back of the boxes, and charged him to make all the haste home that he could

Sir Tho. That's right, John; very well; your account pleases me much, honest John. [*Exit* JOHN.] No, I did not expect the first act would produce any prodigious effect. And, after all, the first act is but a mere introduction; just opens the business, the plot, and gives a little insight into the characters: so that if you but engage and interest the house, it is as much as the best writer can flatt—[*knocking without.*] Gadso! what, Robin already! why the fellow has the feet of a Mercury. [*Enter* ROBIN.] Well, Robin, and what news do you bring?

Robin. I, I, I——

Sir Tho. Stop, Robin, and recover your breath. Now, Robin

Robin. There has been a woundy uproar below.

Sir Tho. An uproar! what, at the playhouse?

Robin. Ay.

Sir Tho. At what?

Robin. I don't know: belike at the words the playfolk were talking.

Sir Tho. At the players! how can that be? Oh, now I begin to conceive. Poor fellow, he knows but little of plays. What, Robin, I suppose, hallooing, and clapping, and knocking of sticks?

Robin. Hallooing! ay, and hooting too.

Sir Tho. And hooting!

Robin. Ay, and hissing to boot.

Sir Tho. Hissing! you must be mistaken.

Robin. By the mass, but I am not.

Sir Tho. Impossible! Oh, most likely some drunken, disorderly fellows, that were disturbing the house and interrupting the play: too common a case; the people were right: they deserved a rebuke. Did not you hear them cry out, out, out?

Robin. Noa; that was not the cry; 'twas Off, off, off.

Sir Tho. That was a whimsical noise. Zounds! that must be the players. Did you observe nothing else?

Robin. Belike the quarrel first began between the gentry and a black-a-moor man.

Sir Tho. With Friday! The public taste is debauched; honest nature is too plain and simple for their vitiated palates! [*Enter* JULIET.] Juliet, Robin brings me the strangest account; some little disturbance; but I suppose it was soon settled again. Oh, but here comes Mr. Staytape, my tailor; he is a rational being; we shall be able to make something of him. [*Enter* STAYTAPE.]

So, Staytape; what, is the third act over already?

Stay. Over, sir! no; nor ever will be.

Sir Tho. What do you mean?

Stay. Cut short.

Sir Tho. I don't comprehend you.

Stay. Why, sir, the poet has made a mistake in measuring the taste of the town; the goods, it seems, did not fit; so they returned them upon the gentleman's hands.

Sir Tho. Rot your affectation and quaintness, you puppy! speak plain.

Stay. Why then, sir, Robinson Crusoe is dead.

Sir Tho. Dead!

Stay. Ay; and, what is worse, will never rise any more. You will soon have the particulars; for there were four or five of your friends close at my heels.

Sir Tho. Staytape, Juliet, run and stop them; say I am gone out; I am sick; I am engaged: but, whatever you do, be sure you don't let Bever come in. Secure of the victory, I invited them to the celebr—

Stay. Sir, they are here.

Sir Tho. Confound—

Enter PUFF, DACTYL, *and* RUST.

Rust. Ay, truly, Mr. Puff, this is but a bitter beginning; then the young man must turn himself to some other trade.

Puff. Servant, Sir Thomas; I suppose you have heard the news of——

Sir Tho. Yes, yes; I have been told it before.

Dac. I confess I did not suspect it; but there is no knowing what effect these things will have, till they come on the stage.

Rust. For my part, I don't know much of these matters; but a couple of gentleman near me, who seemed sagacious enough too, declared that it was the vilest stuff they ever had heard, and wondered the players would act it.

Dac. Yes; I don't remember to have seen a more general dislike.

Puff. I was thinking to ask you, Sir Thomas, for your interest with Mr. Bever about buying the copy: but now no mortal would read it. Lord, sir, it would not pay for paper and printing.

Rust. I remember Kennet, in his Roman Antiquities, mentions a play of Terence's, Mr. Dactyl, that was terribly treated; but that he attributes to the people's fondness for certain *funambuli*, or rope-dancers; but I have not lately heard of any famous tumblers in town: Sir Thomas, have you?

Sir Tho. How should I; do you suppose I trouble my head about tumblers?

Rust. Nay, I did not—

Bever. [*Speaking without.*] Not to be spoke with! Don't tell me, sir; he must, he shall.

Sir Tho. Mr. Bever's voice. If he is admitted in his present disposition, the whole secret will certainly out.—Gentlemen, some affairs of a most interesting nature makes it impossible for me to have the honour of your company to-night; therefore I beg you would be so good as to—

Rust. Affairs! no bad news? I hope Miss Julé is well.

Sir Tho. Very well; but I am most exceedingly—

Rust. I shall only just stay to see Mr. Bever. Poor lad! he will be most horribly down in the mouth: a little comfort wo'n't come amiss.

Sir Tho. Mr. Bever, sir! you wo'n't see him here.

Rust. Not here! why I thought I heard his voice but just now.

Sir Tho. You are mistaken, Mr. Rust; but—

Rust. May be so; then we will go. Sir Thomas, my compliments of condolence, if you please, to the poet.

Sir Tho. Ay, ay.

Dac. And mine; for I suppose we sha'n't see him soon.

Puff. Poor gentleman! I warrant he wo'n't show his head for these six months.

Rust. Ay, ay; indeed I am very sorry for him; so tell him, sir.

Dac. and Puff. So are we.

Rust. Sir Thomas, your servant. Come, gentlemen. By all this confusion in Sir Thomas, there must be something more in the wind than I know; but I will watch, I am resolved.

Bever. [*Without.*] Rascals, stand by! I must, I will see him.

Enter BEVER.

Bever. So, sir; this is delicate treatment, after all I have suffered.

Sir Tho. Mr. Bever, I hope you don't—that is—

Bever. Well, Sir Thomas Lofty, what think you now of your Robinson Crusoe? a pretty performance!

Sir Tho. Think, Mr. Bever! I think the public are blockheads; a tasteless, stupid, ignorant tribe; and a man of genius deserves to be damned who writes any thing for them. But courage, dear Dick! the principals will give you what the people refuse; the closet will do you that justice the stage has denied: print your play.

Bever. My play; zounds, sir, 'tis your own.

Sir Tho. Speak lower, dear Dick; be moderate, my good, dear lad!

Bever. Oh, Sir Thomas, you may be easy enough; you are safe and secure, removed far from that precipice that has dashed me to pieces.

Sir Tho. Dear Dick, don't believe it will hurt you. The critics, the real judges, will discover in that piece such excellent talents—

Bever. No, Sir Thomas, no. I shall neither flatter you nor myself; I have acquired a right to speak what I think. Your play, sir, is a wretched performance; and in this opinion all mankind are united.

Sir Tho. May be not.

Bever. If your piece had been greatly received, I would have declared Sir Thomas Lofty the author; if coldly, I would have owned it myself: but such disgraceful, such contemptible treatment! I own the burden is too heavy for me; so, sir, you must bear it yourself.

Sir Tho. Me, dear Dick! what to become ridiculous in the decline of my life; to destroy in one hour the fame that forty years has been building! that was the prop, the support of my age! Can you be cruel enough to desire it?

Bever. 'Zounds! sir, and why must I be your crutch? Would you have me become a voluntary victim? No, sir, this cause does not merit martyrdom.

Sir Tho. I own myself greatly obliged; but persevere, dear Dick, persevere; you have time to recover your fame: I beg it with tears in my eyes. Another play will—

Bever. No, Sir Thomas; I have done with the stage: the Muses and I meet no more.

Sir Tho. Nay, there are various roads open in life.

Bever. Not one, where your piece wo'n't pursue me. If I go to the bar, the ghost of the accursed comedy will follow, and haunt me in Westminster-hall: nay, when I die, it will stick to my memory, and I shall be handed down to posterity with the author of "Love in a Hollow Tree."

Sir Tho. Then marry: you are a pretty smart figure; and your poetical talents.

Bever. And what fair would admit of my suit, or family wish to receive me? Make the case your own, Sir Thomas; would you?

Sir Tho. With infinite pleasure.

Bever. Then give me your niece; her hand shall seal up my lips.

Sir Tho. What, Juliet? willingly. But are you serious, do you really admire the girl?

Bever. Beyond what words can express. It was by her advice I consented to father your play.

Sir Tho. What, is Juliet apprised? Here, Robin, John, run and call my niece hither this moment. That giddy baggage will blab all in an instant.

Bever. You are mistaken; she is wiser than you are aware of.

Enter JULIET.

Sir Tho. Oh, Juliet! you know what has happened.

Jul. I do, sir.

Sir Tho. Have you revealed this unfortunate secret?

Jul. To no mortal, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Come, give me your hand. Mr. Bever, child, for my sake, has renounced the stage, and the whole republic of letters; in return, I owe him your hand.

Jul. My hand! what, to a poet hooted, hissed, and exploded! You must pardon me, sir.

Sir Tho. Juliet, a trifle: the most they can say of him is, that he is a little wanting in wit; and he has so many brother writers to keep him in countenance, that, now-a-days, that is no reflection at all.

Jul. Then, sir, your engagement to Mr. Rust.

Sir Tho. I have found out the rascal: he has been more impertinently severe on my play than all the rest put together; so that I am determined he shall be none of the man.

Enter RUST.

Rust. Are you so, sir? what, then I am to be sacrificed, in order to preserve the secret that you are a blockhead. But you are out in your politics; before night it shall be known in all the coffee-houses in town.

Sir Tho. For Heaven's sake, Mr. Rust!

Rust. And to-morrow I will paragraph you in every news-paper; you shall no longer impose on the world; I will unmask you; the lion's skin shall hide you no longer.

Sir Tho. Juliet! Mr. Bever! what can I do?

Bever. Sir Thomas, let me manage this matter. Hark ye, old gentleman, a word in your ear: you remember what you have in your pocket?

Rust. Hey! how! what?

Bever. The curiosity that has cost you so much pains.

Rust. What, my Æneas! my precious relict of Troy!

Bever. You must give up that, or the lady.

Jul. How, Mr. Bever!

Bever. Never fear; I am sure of my man.

Rust. Let me consider—As to the girl, girls are plenty enough; I can marry whenever I will; but

my paper, my Phœnix, that springs fresh from the flames, that can never be matched—Take her.

Bever. And, as you love your own secret, be carefull of ours.

Rust. I am dumb.

Sir Tho. Now, Juliet.

Jul. You join me, sir, to an unfortunate bard, but, to procure your peace—

Sir Tho. You oblige me for ever. Now the secret dies with us four. My fault. I owe him much:

Be it your care to show it;
And bless the man, though I have damn'd the poet.

THE

COMMISSARY,

A Comedy,

IN THREE ACTS,

As performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

Queis facile est ædem conducere flumina portus,
Siccandam eluviem, portandum ad busta cadaver.
Juv. Sat. III.

Criminibus debent hortos, prætoria, mensas,
Argentum vetus, et stantem extra pocula Captum.
Ibid. Sat. I.

REMARKS.

As usual with Foote, this comedy paints the spirit and *manners of the times* to the life, of which he merely holds up, as it were, the mirror to our view; and very *bad times* they were in which it appeared—viz. 1765, two years after the cessation of "the German war." At that period, corruption and immorality stalked the land, almost uncontrolled; to which, the disbanding a large armed force mainly contributed, as much by the diffusion of the dissolute habits of camps, and the consequent disposal of large sums so obtained, as by the fashion of aping French manners and modes of thinking that then prevailed.

Mrs. Mechlin's is a character that exists even to our day, only in a less concentred state, perhaps, and her remark, as to Isaac Fungus' being "a *sensible fellow, we* must guard against him," shows how greatly common sense is to be dreaded by frivolity and vice. Our author has drawn her as a person of some education,—and he did right: base-born people may act basely without dread-

ing the reproach of forgetting their origin. Not so their betters, who most frequently appeal to their *honourable* motives when they swerve most; yet do these constantly find apologists for their proven delinquencies, whilst the poorer, the abject, and the wretched, are invariably consigned, by the same writers, to the full measure of obloquy and punishment that awaits their conviction—morally or legally.

In this piece, Foote again taxed the French comedy with characters, Mrs. Mechlin being no other than the *Femme d'intrigue*, and the Commissary too much resembles the *Gentilhomme Bourgeois*, to allow us a doubt that he kept Moliere in his eye, while filling up his principal character. It met with good success during two seasons; it reads well, and has been reprinted in two or three forms.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. Zac. Fungus ..... *Mr. Foote.*
Mr. Isaac Fungus ..... *Mr. Castallo.*
Mr. Gruel ..... *Mr. Shuter.*
Young Loveit ..... *Mr. Davis.*
Dr. Catgut ..... *Mr. Parsons.*
Simon ..... *Mr. Preston.*
Mr. Bridoun ..... *Mr. Gardner.*
Mr. Paduasoy ..... *Mr. Keen.*
Mr. Harpy ..... *Mr. Tindal.*
La Fleur ..... *Mr. Johnson.*
John ..... *Mr. Marshall.*
Hackney-Coachman ..... *Mr Parsons.*

Mrs. Mechlin ..... *Miss Cheney.*
Mrs. Loveit ..... *Mr. Shuter.*
Dolly ..... *Miss Reynolds.*
Jenny ..... *Mrs. Granger.*

SCENE—A Bagnio, near Covent-garden.

THE COMMISSARY.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

SCENE.—Mrs. MECHLIN'S *House.*

[*Loud knocking at the Door.*]

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Rap, rap, rap, up-stairs and down, from morning to night; if this same Commissary stays longer amongst us, my mistress must e'en hire a porter. Who's there?

Sim. [*without.*] Is Mrs. Mechlin at home?

Jen. No. [*opens the door.*] Oh, what is it you, Simon.

Enter SIMON.

Sim. At your service, sweet Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Why, you knock *with authority;* and what are your commands, Master Simon?

Sim. I come, madam, to receive those of your mistress. What, Jenny, has she any great affair on the anvil? Her summons is most exceedingly pressing; and you need not be told, child, that a man of my consequence does not trouble himself about trifles.

Jen. Oh, sir, I know very well you principal actors do not perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, ma'am, but, notwithstanding your ironical sneer, it is not every man that will do for your mistress: her agents must have genius and parts: I do not suppose, in the whole Bills of Mortality, there is so general and extensive a dealer as my friend, Mrs. Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be sure, we have plenty of customers; and, for various kinds of commodities, it would be pretty difficult I fancy to——

Sim. Commodities! Your humble servant, sweet Mrs. Jane: yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities, indeed.

Jen. Mr. Simon, I don't understand you; I suppose it is no secret in what sort of goods our dealing consists.

Sim. No, no; they are pretty well known.

Jen. And to be sure, though, now and then, to oblige a customer, my mistress does condescend to smuggle a little——

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Yet, there are no people in the Liberty of Westminster that live in more credit than we do.

Sim. Bravo.

Jen. The very best of quality are not ashamed to visit my mistress.

Sim. They have reason.

Jen. Respected by the neighbours.

Sim. I know it.

Jen. Punctual in her payments.

Sim. To a moment.

Jen. Regular hours.

Sim. Doubtless.

Jen. Never misses the sarmant on Sundays.

Sim. I own it.

Jen. Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unless, now and then, when the poor gentlewoman happens to be overtaken in liquor.

Sim. Granted.

Jen. Not at all given to lying, but, like other tradesfolks, in the way of her business.

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well! then pray, sir, what would you insinuate? Look you, Mr. Simon, don't go to cast reflections upon us; don't think to blast the reputation of our——

Sim. Hark ye, Jenny; are you serious?

Jen. Serious! Aye, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are!

Jen. Upon my word, Mr. Simon, you should not give your tongue such a license; let me tell you, these airs do not become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day! why, where the deuce have I got? sure I have mistaken the house; is not this Mrs. Mechlin's?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs. Mechlin, at the sign of the Star, in the parish of St. Paul's?

Jen. Bravo.

Sim. That commercial caterpillar?

Jen. I know it.

Sim. That murderer of manufactures?

Jen. Doubtless.

Sim. That walking warehouse?

Jen. Granted.

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter?

Jen. Very well.

Sim. That engrosser and seducer of virgins?

Jen. Keep it up, master Simon.

Sim. That forestaller of Bagnios!

Jen. Incomparable fine.

Sim. That canting, cozening, money-lending, match-making, pawnbroking—[*Loud knocking.*]

Jen. Mighty well, sir: here comes my mistress; she shall thank you for the pretty picture you have been pleased to draw.

Sim. Nay, but, dear Jenny—

Jen. She shall be told how highly she stands in your favour.

Sim. But, my sweet girl——[*Knocking again.*]

Jen. Let me go, Mr. Simon, don't you hear?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at once!

Jen. Hands off.

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs. Jane, and dictate the articles.

Enter MRS. MECHLIN, *followed by a Hackney Coachman, with several Bundles, in a Capuchin a Bonnet, and her Clothes pinned up.*

Mrs. Mech. So, hussey, what must I stay all day in the streets? who have we here! the devil's in the wenches, I think,—one of your fellows, I suppose—Oh, is it you! how fares it, Simon—

Jen. Madam, you should not have waited a minute, but Mr. Simon——

Sim. Hush, hush! you barbarous jade——

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open the door, flew up stairs, fell over the landing-place, and quite barred up the way.

Sim. Yes, and I am afraid I have put out my ankle. Thanks, Jenny, you shall be no loser, you slut.

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon.——Oh, Lord have mercy upon me, what a round have I taken!—— Is the wench petrified? Why don't you reach me a chair, don't you see I'm tired to death?

Jeh. Indeed, ma'am, you'll kill yourself.

Sim. Upon my word, Ma'am Mechlin, you should take a little care of yourself; indeed you labour too hard.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothing: only victuals and clothes; *more cost than worship.*—Why does not the wench take the things from the fellow? Well, what's your fare?

Coachm. Mistress, it's honestly worth half a crown.

Mrs. Mech. Give him a couple of shillings and send him away.

Coachm. I hope you'll tip me the *tester* to drink?

Mrs. Mech. Them there fellows are never contented; drink! stand further off! why, you smell already as strong as a beer barrel.

Coachm. Mistress, that's because I have already been drinking.

Mrs. Mech. And are you not ashamed, you sot, to be eternally guzzling? You had better buy you some clothes.

Coachm. No, mistress, my honour wo'n't let me do that.

Mrs. Mech. Your honour! and pray, how does that hinder you?

Coachm. Why, when a good gentlewoman, like you, cries, Here, coachman, here's something to drink——

Mrs. Mech. Well!

Coachm. Would it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing else? No, mistress, my conscience wo'n't let me; because, why, it's the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs. Mech. Did you ever hear such a blockhead?

Coachm. No, no, mistress; though I am a poor

man, I wo'n't forfeit my honour; my cattle, tho'f I love 'em, poor beastesses, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mrs. Mech. Yes, you and your horses give pretty strong proofs of your love and your honour; for you have no clothes on your back, and they have no flesh. Well, Jenny, give him the sixpence: there, there, lay it out as you will.

Coachm. It will be to your health, mistress; it shall melt at *the Meuse*, before I go home; I shall be careful to clear my conscience.

Mrs. Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coachm. You need not. Mistress, your servant.

[*Exit* COACHMAN.

Mrs. Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny?

Jen. The gentleman, ma'am, about the Gloucestershire living.

Mrs. Mech. He was! Oh, oh! what, I suppose, his stomach's come down? Does he like the incumbrance? will he marry the party?

Jen. Why, that article seems to go a little against him.

Mrs. Mech. Does it so? then let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air, it will soon give him an appetite. He'll stick to his honour too, till his cassock is worn to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, ma'am, it seems pretty rusty already.

Mrs. Mech. Devilish squeamish, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?——

Jen. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Mech. So that the affair will be a secret

to all but himself. But he must quickly resolve, for next week his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promised to call about four.

Mrs. Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loss for a husband; there is, to my knowledge, a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a small place in the Custom-house.

Jen. He shall know it.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and tell him, that the party's party has interest enough to obtain it whenever he will. And, then, the bridegroom may put the purchase-money, too, of that same presentation into pocket.

Jen. Truly, ma'am, I should think this would prove the best match for the lady.

Mrs. Mech. Who doubts it?—Here, Jenny, carry these things above stairs. Take care of the aigrette, leave the watch upon the table, and be sure you don't mislay the pearl necklace; the lady goes to Mrs. Cornelly's to-night, and if she has any luck, she will be sure to redeem it to-morrow.

[*Exit* JENNY.

Sim. What a world of affairs! it is a wonder, madam, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs. Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, Master Simon.—But I have a great affair in hand—such an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all.

Sim. If I, ma'am, can be of the least use——

Mrs. Mech. Of the highest! there is no doing without you.—You know the great——

Jenny. (returning.) I have put the things you ordered, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Very well, you may go. [*Exit* JENNY.] I say, you know the great Commissary, that is come to lodge in my house. Now, they

say, this Mr. Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor. Heaven knows how he came by it: but that, you know, is no business of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant, abroad. [*Loud knocking.*] Who the deuce can that be? But let it be who it will, you must not go till I speak to you.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. The Widow Loveit, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. What, the old liquorish dowager from Devonshire-square? show her in. [*Exit* JENNY.] You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon; I shall soon despatch her affair. [*Exit* SIMON.

Enter MRS. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, good morning to you, good Mrs. Mechlin. John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs. Mech. You had better sit here, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—*Ugh, ugh, ugh,*—[*coughs.*] Consider, I have no time to lose, and you are always so full of employment.

Mrs. Mech. Forgot you! you shall judge, Mrs. Loveit. I have, ma'am, provided a whole cargo of husbands for you of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and sizes: so you see, you have nothing to do but to choose.

Mrs. Lov. To choose! Mrs. Mechlin! Lord help me, what choice can I have? I look upon wedlock to be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and a great one it was! My poor dear man that's gone, I shall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs. Mech. 'Pshaw! madam, do not let us

trouble our heads about him, it is high time that he was forgot.

Mrs. Lov. But wo'n't his relations think me rather too quick?

Mrs. Mech. Not a jot; the greatest compliment you could pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you reason to be fond of the state. But what do you mean by *quick!* Why he has been buried these three weeks—

Mrs. Lov. And three days, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed! quite an age!

Mrs. Lov. Yes; but I shall never forget him; sleeping or waking, he's always before me. His dear swelled belly, and his poor shrunk legs. Lord bless me, Mrs. Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan.

Mrs. Mech. No!

Mrs. Lov. No, indeed; and then his bit of a purple nose, and his little *weezen* face as sharp as a razor—don't mention it; I can never forget him, —[*cries.*]

Mrs. Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance, indeed. But, ma'am, if you continue to be so fond of your last husband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs. Lov. Why, what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? a poor lone widow-woman as I am; there's nobody minds me: my tenants behind-hand, my servants all careless, my children undutiful——Ugh, ugh, ugh,—[*coughs.*]

Mrs. Mech. You have a villanous cough, Mrs. Loveit; shall I send for some lozenges?

Mrs. Lov. No, I thank you, it's nothing at all; mere habit, just a little trick I've got.

Mrs. Mech. But I wonder you should have all

these vexations to plague you, madam, you, who are so rich, and so——

Mrs. Lov. Forty thousand in the four per cents. every morning I rise, Mrs. Mechlin, besides two houses at Hackney. But then, my affairs are so weighty and intricate; there is such tricking in lawyers, and such torments in children, that I cannot do by myself. I must have a helpmate; quite necessity, no matter of choice.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, I understand you, you marry merely for convenience; just only to get an assistant, a kind of a guard, *a fence* to your property?

Mrs. Lov. Nothing else.

Mrs. Mech. I thought so; quite prudential; so that age is none of your object; you do not want a scampering, giddy, sprightly, young——

Mrs. Lov. Young! Heaven forbid. What do you think, like some ladies I know, that I want to have my husband taken for one of my grand-children! No, no; thank Heaven, such vain thoughts never entered my head.

Mrs. Mech. But yet, as your matters stand, he ought not to be so very old neither; for instance now, of what use to you would be a husband of sixty?

Mrs. Lov. Sixty! Are you mad, Mrs. Mechlin? What, do you think I want to turn nurse?

Mrs. Mech. Or fifty-five?

Mrs. Lov. Ugh, ugh, ugh——

Mrs. Mech. Or fifty?

Mrs. Lov. Oh! that's too cunning an age; men, now-a-days, rarely marry at fifty, they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs. Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or——

Mrs. Lov. Shall I, Mrs. Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind?

Mrs. Mech. I believe, madam, that will be your best way.

Mrs. Lov. Why, then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to secure and preserve their obedience, will be to marry a man that wo'n't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. Why, I thought you declared against youth?

Mrs. Lov. So I do, so I do; but then, six or seven and twenty is not so very young, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a pretty ripe age; for at that time of life men can bustle and stir: they are not easily checked, and whatever they take in hand they go through with.

Mrs. Lov. True, true.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay; it is then they may be said to be useful; it is the only wear and tear season.

Mrs. Lov. Right, right.

Mrs. Mech. Well, ma'am, I now see what you want; and to-morrow, about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call——

Mrs. Lov. I sha'n't fail.

Mrs. Mech. I think I can suit you.

Mrs. Lov. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs. Mech. You may depend upon it I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs. Lov. But, Mrs. Mechlin, be sure don't let him be older than that; not above seven or eight and twenty at most; and let it be as soon as you conveniently can.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, ma'am.

Mrs. Lov. Because, you know, the more children I have by the second *venter*, the greater plague I shall prove to those I had by the first.

Mrs. Mech. True, ma'am. You had better lean

on me to the door; but, indeed, Mrs. Loveit, you are very malicious to your children, very revengeful, indeed.

Mrs. Lov. Ah, they deserve it: you can't think what sad whelps they turn out; no punishment can be too much; if their poor father could but have foreseen they would have——why did I mention the dear man! it melts me too much. Well, peace be with him.——To-morrow, about this time, Mrs. Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs. Mech. I can't say.

Mrs. Lov. Well, a good day, good Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Here, John, take care of your mistress. [*Exit* MRS. LOVEIT.] A good morning to you, ma'am. Jenny, bid Simon come up.—A *husband!* there now is a proof of the prudence of age; I wonder they don't add a clause to *the act* to prevent the old from marrying clandestinely as well as the young. I am sure there are as many unsuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

Enter SIMON.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr. Fungus's servants below?

Sim. Three or four strange faces.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, some of that troop, I suppose; come, Simon, be seated.—Well, Simon, as I was telling you, this Mr. Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart-load of money, and who (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts——

Sim. I formerly knew him, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no.

Mrs. Mech. I am glad of that. This spark, I say, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determined to rival them, too, in every other accomplishment.

Sam. Will that be so easy? why, he must be upwards of——

Mrs. Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to set up for a gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. But fine talents, you know, and a strong inclination—

Sim. That, indeed—

Mrs. Mech. Then I promise you he spares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent?

Mrs. Mech. Oh, always at it. Learning something or other from morning to night; my house is a perfect academy, such a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, musicians:—but, however, to sweeten the pill, I have a *fellow-feeling* for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, ma'am; that's always the rule.

Mrs. Mech. But one of his studies is really diverting; I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs. Mech. Oratory.——You must know, his first ambition is to have a seat in a certain assembly; and in order to appear there with credit, Mr. What-d'ye-call'em, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture upon speaking, and there is such haranguing and bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll see enough on't yourself; for do you know, Simon, you are to be his valet de chambre?

Sim. Me, madam!

Mrs. Mech. Ay, his privy counsellor, his confident, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that answer?

Mrs. Mech. There I am coming.—You are to know, that our 'Squire *Wou'd-be* is violently bent upon matrimony; and nothing, forsooth, will go down but a person of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs. Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter contempt; a grand alliance is all that he wants; so that the lady has but her veins full of high blood, he does not care two-pence how low and empty her purse is.

Sim. But, ma'am, wo'n't it be difficult to meet with a suitable subject? I believe there are few ladies of quality that——

Mrs. Mech. Oh! as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed!

Mrs. Mech. You know my niece, Dolly?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs. Mech. What think you of her?

Sim. Of Miss Dolly, for what?

Mrs. Mech. For what! you are plaguily dull; why a woman of fashion, you dunce.

Sim. To be sure, Miss Dolly is very deserving, and few ladies have a better appearance; but, bless me, madam, here people of rank are so generally known, that the slightest inquiry would poison your project.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fears from that quarter; there, I think, I am pretty secure.

Sim. If that, indeed, be the case—

Mrs. Mech. In the first place, Mr. Fungus has an entire reliance on me.

Sim. That's something.

Mrs. Mech. Then to baffle any idle curiosity, we are not derived from any of your new-fangled gentry, who owe their upstart nobility to your Harrys and Edwards. No, no, we are scions from an older stock; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal descendant from Hercules Alexander, Earl of Glendowery, prime minister to King Malcolm the First.

Sim. Odso! a qualification for a canon of Strasbourg. So then, it seems, you are transplanted from the Banks of the Tweed; cry you mercy! But how will Miss Dolly be able to manage the accent?

Mrs. Mech. Very well; she was two years an actress in *Edenborough*.

Sim. That's true; is the overture made; has there been any interview?

Mrs. Mech. Several; we have no dislike to his person; can't but own he is rather agreeable; and as to his proposals, they are greater than we could desire: but we are prudent and careful, say nothing without the Earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be easily had.

Mrs. Mech. Not so easily; and now comes your part: but first, how goes the world with you, Simon?

Sim. Never worse! The ten bags of tea and the cargo of brandy them peering rascals took from me, in Sussex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon! why, then I am afraid there's an end of your traffic.

Sim. Totally: for now those fellows have got

the Isle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Then you are entirely at leisure.

Sim. As a Bath turnspit in the month of July.

Mrs. Mech. You are then, Simon, an old family servant in waiting here on the lady; but despatched to the north, with a view to negotiate the treaty, you are just returned with the noble Peer's resolution. Prepare you a suitable equipage, I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover and one for the lady——

Sim. The contents——

Mrs. Mech. Oh, you may read them within: now with regard to any questions, I will furnish you with suitable answers; but you have a bungler to deal with, so your cards will be easily played.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Miss Dolly, ma'am, in a hackney-coach at the corner: may she come in?

Mrs. Mech. Are the servants out of the way?

Jen. Oh, she is so muffled up and disguised, that she'll run no danger from them.

Mrs. Mech. Be sure keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, ma'am. [*Exit* JENNY.

Mrs. Mech. Simon, take those two letters that are under the furthermost cushion in the window, run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at farthest.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions?

Mrs. Mech. Time enough. I shall be in the way: for it is me that must introduce you above.

[*Exit* SIMON.] So, things seem now in a pretty good train; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me easy for life. To say truth, I begin to be tired of my trade. To be sure, the profits are great; but then, so are the risks that I run: besides, my private practice begins to be smoked. Ladies are supposed to come here with different designs than merely to look at my goods: some of my best customers, too, are got out of my channel, and manage their matters at home by their maids. Those Asylums! they gave a dreadful blow to my business. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, that I could supply him with choice in an hour; but the market is spoiled, and a body might as soon procure a hare or a partridge as a pretty———[*Enter* DOLLY.] ———So, niece, are all things prepared; have you got the papers from Harpy?

Dolly. Here they are, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Let me see—Oh, the marriage articles for Fungus, to sign. Have you got the contract about you?

Dolly. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs. Mech. True, I had forgot: but where is the bond that I——Here it is; this, Dolly, you must sign and seal before witness.

Dolly. To what end, aunt?

Mrs. Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgement for all the trouble I have taken; a little hint to your husband, that he may reimburse your poor aunt, for your clothes, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dolly. I hope my aunt does not suspect that I can ever be wanting———

Mrs. Mech. No, my dear, not in the least: but it is best, Dolly, in order to prevent all retrospec-

tion, that we settle accounts before you change your condition.

Dolly. But, ma'am, may not I see the contents?

Mrs. Mech. The contents, love, of what use will that be to you? Sign and seal, that's enough.

Dolly. But, aunt, I choose to see what I sign.

Mrs. Mech. To see! what then you suspect me?

Dolly. No, ma'am, but a little caution——

Mrs. Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! How dare you dispute my commands? Have not I made you, raised you from nothing, and wo'n't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dolly. Madam, I——

Mrs. Mech. Answer me, hussy: was not you a beggar's brat at my door? did not I, out of compassion, take you into my house, call you my niece, and give you suitable breeding?

Dolly. True, madam.

Mrs. Mech. And what return did you make me? You had scarce got into your teens, you forward slut, but you brought me a child almost as big as youself; and a delightful father you chose for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre musician, that sick monkey-face maker of crotchets: that eternal trotter after all the little draggle-tailed girls of town. Oh, you low slut; had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vexed me; but a fiddler.

Dolly. For heaven's sake——

Mrs. Mech. After that you eloped, commenced stroller, and in a couple of years returned to town in your original trim, with scarce a rag to your back.

Dolly. Pray, ma'am——

Mrs. Mech. Did not I, notwithstanding, receive you again? have not I tortured my brains for your good? found you a husband as rich as a Jew,

just brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuse to sign a paltry paper?

Dolly. Pray, madam, give it me, I will sign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs. Mech. You will; yes, so you had best. And what is become of the child? have you done as I ordered?

Dolly. The Doctor was not at home; but the nurse left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs. Mech. You heard nothing from him?

Dolly. Not a word.

Mrs. Mech. Then he is meditating some mischief, I warrant. However, let our good stars secure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky, though, that Mr. Fungus has chosen the doctor for his master of music; but as yet he has not been here, and, if possible, we must prevent him.

Enter JENNY, *hastily.*

Jen. Mr. Fungus, the tallow-chandler, ma'am, is crossing the way, shall I say you are at home?

Mrs. Mech. His brother has servants enough, let some of them answer. Hide, Dolly. [*Exit* DOLLY and JENNY.]——[*One knock at the door.*] Ay, that's the true tap of the trader. This old brother of ours is smoky and shrewd, and although an odd, is a sensible fellow; we must guard against him: if he gets but an inkling, but the slighest suspicion, our project is marred.—— [*A noise without.*] What the deuce is the matter? As I live, a squabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hired this morning. This may make mirth; I'll listen a little. [*Retires.*

Enter Mr. ISAAC FUNGUS, *driving in* LA FLEUR.

I. Fun. What, is there nobody in the house

that can give me an answer; where's my brother, you rascal?

La Fleur. Je n' entend pas.

I. Fun. Pas, what the devil is that; answer yes or no; is my brother at home? don't shrug up your shoulders at me, you——Oh, here comes a rational being ——

Enter MRS. MECHLIN.

Madam Mechlin, how fares it? this here lantern-jawed rascal wo'n't give me an answer, and, indeed, would scarce let me into the house.

La Fleur. Ce gros Bourgeois a fait une tapage de diable.

Mrs. Mech. Fy-donc! c'est le frère de monsieur.

La Fleur. Le frère! Mon Dieu!

I. Fun. What is all this? what the devil lingo is the fellow a talking?

Mrs. Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fun. From France! and is this the best of his breeding? I thought we had taught them better manners abroad, than to come here and insult us at home. People make such a rout about smuggling their Frenchified goods, but their men do us most mischief. If we could but hinder the importing of them——

Mrs. Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton, I see that, Mr. Isaac.

I. Fun. I warrant me: is brother Zachary at home?

Mrs. Mech. Above stairs, sir.

I. Fun. Any company with him?

Mrs. Mech. Not any to hinder your visit. La Fleur, ouvrez la porte.

I. Fun. Get along you——Mrs. Mechlin, your servant.——I can't think what the devil makes

you quality so fond of the mounsiers; for my part I don't see——March and be hanged to you—you sooty-faced——

[*Exeunt* I. FUNGUS *and* LA FLEUR.

Mrs. Mech. Come, Dolly, you may now appear.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Mr. Paduasoy, ma'am, the Spital-fields weaver; he has been waiting this hour, and says he has some people at home——

Mrs. Mech. Let him enter. [*Exit* JENNY.] In a couple of minutes I'll follow you, Dolly!

Enter PADUASOY.

Mrs. Mech. Mr. Paduasoy, you may load yourself home with those silks, they wo'n't do for my market.

Mr. Pad. Why, what's the matter, madam?

Mrs. Mech. Matter! you are a pretty fellow indeed, you a tradesman! but it's lucky I know you: things might have been worse; let us settle accounts, Mr. Paduasoy; you'll see no more of my money.

Pad. I shall be sorry for that, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Sorry! answer me one question; am not I the best customer that ever you had?

Pad. I confess it.

Mrs. Mech. Have not I mortgaged my precious soul, by swearing to my quality customers that the stuff from your looms was the produce of Lyons?

Pad. Granted.

Mrs. Mech. And unless that had been believed, could you have sold them a yard, nay a *nail*?

Pad. I believe not.

Mrs. Mech. Very well. Did not I, sir, procure you more money for your cursed goods, when

sold as the manufacture of France, than as mere English they could have ever produced you?

Pad. I never denied it.

Mrs. Mech. Then are not you a pretty fellow, to blow up and ruin my reputation at once?

Pad. Me, madam!

Mrs. Mech. Yes, you.

Pad. As how?

Mrs Mech. Did not you tell me these pieces of silk were entire, and the only ones you had made of that pattern!

Pad. I did.

Mrs. Mech. Now mind. Last Monday I left them as just landed, under pretence of securing them from seizure, at the old countess of Furbelow's, by whose means I was sure to get rid of them both, at my own price; and who should come in last night at the ball at the Mansion-house, where my lady unluckily happened to be, with a full suit of the blue pattern upon her back, but Mrs. Deputy Dowlass, dizen'd out like a duchess.

Pad. Mrs. Deputy Dowlass! Is it possible?

Mrs. Mech. There is no denying the fact; but that was not all: if, indeed, Mrs. Deputy had behaved like a gentlewoman, and swore they had been sent her from Paris, why there the thing would have died; but see what it is to have to do with mechanics! the fool owned she had them from you. I should be glad to see any of my customers at a loss for a lie. But as to those trumpery traders, Mr. Paduasoy, you'll never gain any credit by them.

Pad. This must be a trick of my wife's; I know the women are intimate, but this piece of intelligence will make a hot-house. None of my fault,

indeed, Mrs. Mechlin; I hope, ma'am, this wo'n't make any difference?

Mrs. Mech. Difference! I don't believe I shall be able to smuggle a gown for you these six months. What is in that bundle?

Pad. Some India handkerchiefs, that you promised to procure of a supercargo at Woolwich, for Sir Thomas Calico's lady.

Mrs. Mech. Are you pretty forward with the light sprigged waistcoats from Italy?

Pad. They will be out of the loom in a week.

Mrs. Mech. You need not put any Genoa velvets in hand till the end of the autumn; but you may make me immediately a fresh sortment of foreign ribbons for summer.

Pad Any other commands, Mrs. Mechlin?

Mrs. Mech. Not at present, I think.

Pad. I wish you, madam, a very good morning.

Mrs. Mech. Mr. Paduasoy, Lord! I had like to have forgot. You must write an anonymous letter to the Custom-house, and send me some old silks to be seized; I must treat the town with a bonfire: it will make a fine paragraph for the papers; and, at the same time, advertise the public where such things may be had.

Pad. I shall not fail, Madam.

[*Exit* PADUASOY.

Mrs. Mech. Who says now that I am not a friend to my country? I think the Society for the Encouragement of Arts should vote me a premium. I am sure I am one of the greatest encouragers of our own manufactures.

[*Exit* MRS. MECHLIN.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE. First continues.

Enter COMMISSARY FUNGUS, ISAAC FUNGUS, *and* MRS. MECHLIN.

Z. Fun. Brother Isaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But first answer me this; can knowledge do a man any harm?

I. Fun. No, sarting; what is befitting a man for to learn.

Z. Fun. To learn! and how should you know what is befitting a gentleman to learn? Stick to your trade, master tallow-chandler.

I. Fun. Now, brother Zachary, can you say in your conscience, as how, it is decent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almost lost the use of your legs.

Z. Fun. Lost the use of my legs! to see but the malice of men! Do but ax Mrs. Mechlin; now, ma'am, does not Mr. Dukes say, that, considering my time, I have made a wonderful progress?

I. Fun. Your time, brother Zac!

Z. Fun. Ay, my time, brother Isaac. Why, I ha'n't been at it passing a couple of months, and we have at our school two aldermen and a serjeant-at-law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs. Mech. Very true, sir.

Z. Fun. There now, Mrs. Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, ma'am, does not master allow, that of my age, I am the most hopeful scholar he has?

Mrs. Mech. I can't but say, Mr. Isaac, that the 'squire has made a most prodigious improvement.

Z. Fun. Do you hear that? I wish we had but a *kit*, I would show you what I could do: one, two, three, ha. One, two, three, ha! There are risings and sinkings!

Mrs. Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

Z. Fun. A'n't it? Why, before next winter is over, he says, he'll fit me for dancing in public; and who knows but in Lent you may see me amble at a Ridotto with an opera singer.

Mrs. Mech. And I warrant he acquits himself as well as the best.

I. Fun. Mercy on me! and pray, brother, that thing like a sword in your hand, what may the use of that implement be?

Z. Fun. This? oh, this is a foil.

I. Fun. A foil!

Z. Fun. Ay, a little instrument, by which we, who are gentlemen, are instructed to kill one another.

I. Fun. To kill! marry, heaven forbid; I hope you have no such bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac. you was used to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fun. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic, and afraid of the law, but now I am another guess person: I have been in camps, cantoons, and intrenchments; have marched over bridges and breaches; I have seen the *Ezel* and *Wezel;* I'm got as rich as a Jew, and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fun. Rich as a Jew! Ah, Zac. Zac. but if you had not had another guess trade than fighting; I doubt whether you would have returned altoge-

ther so rich: but now you have got all this wealth, why not sit down and enjoy it quietly?

Z. Fun. Hark ye, Isaac, do you purtend to know life? are you acquainted with the *beaux d'esprits* of the age?

I. Fun. I don't understand you.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; then, how should you know what belongs to gentility?

I. Fun. And why not as well as you, brother Zac. I hope I am every whit as well born?

Z. Fun. Ay, Isaac, but the *breeding* is all; consider, I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think should know a little what belongs to the business; hey, Mrs. Mechlin?

Mrs. Mech. Very true, sir.

Z. Fun. And, as to this foil, do you know, Isaac, in what the art of fencing consists?

I. Fun. How should I?

Z. Fun. Why it is short; there are but two rules: the first is, to give your antagonist as many thrusts as you can; the second, to be careful and receive none yourself.

I. Fun. But how is this to be done?

Z. Fun. Oh, easy enough: for do you see, if you can but divert your adversary's point from the line of your body, it is impossible he ever should hit you; and all this is done by a little turn of the wrist, either this way, or that way. But I'll show you: John, bring me a foil. Mrs. Mechlin, it will be worth your observing. Here, brother Isaac— [*Offers him a foil.*]

I. Fun. Not I.

Z. Fun. These Bourgeois are so frightful——— Mrs. Mechlin, will you, ma'am, do me the favour to push at me a little? Mind, brother, when she

thrusts at me in carte, I do so; and when she pushes in tierce, I do so; and by this means a man is sure to avoid being killed. But it may not be amiss, brother Isaac, to give you the progress of a regular quarrel; and then you will see what sort of a thing a gentleman is. Now, I have been told, do you see, brother Isaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that Captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you please, has, in public company, called me a cuckold———

I. Fun. A cuckold! But how can that be? because why, brother Zac. you be'n't married.

Z. Fun. But, as I am just going to be married, that may very well happen, you know.

Mrs. Mech. True.

Z. Fun. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the captain has said I am a cuckold; upon which, the first time I set eyes on captain Wilkins, either at Vauxhall, or at Ranelagh, I accost him, in a courteous, genteel-like manner—

I. Fun. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fun. Your patience, dear Isaac———in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; captain Hopkins, your servant.

I. Fun. Why, you called him but now Captain Wilkins.

Z. Fun. P'shaw! You blockhead, I tell you the name does not signify nothing——Your servant; shall I crave your 'ear for a moment? The captain politely replies, your commands, good Mr. Fungus? Then we walk side by side——Come here, Mrs. Mechlin——[*They walk up and down*] for some time as civil as can be. Mind, brother Isaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fun. Hey!——no, t'other side, Mrs. Mech-

lin ——that's right——I hear, captain Wilkins ——

I. Fun. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Zounds! Isaac, be quiet——Wilkins, that you have taken some liberties about and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't understand——

I. Fun. Don't swear, brother Zachary.

Z. Fun. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow?

I. Fun. But you are grown such a reprobate since you went to the wars——

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, stop the tongue of that blockhead; why, dunce, I am speaking by rule, and Mrs. Mechlin can tell you, that duels and dammes go always together.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, always.

Z. Fun. Which, damme, I don't understand. Liberties with you! cries the captain, where, when, and in what manner? Last Friday night, in company at the St. Alban's, you called me a buck, and moreover said that my horns were exalted. Now, sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand satisfaction. That, sir, is what I never deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr. Fungus, I can't consent to give you that rank. How, sir, do you deny my gentility! Oh, that affront must be answered this instant—— Draw, sir! Now push, Mrs. Mechlin. [*They fence.*] There, I parry tierce, there, I parry carte, there I parry——Hold, hold, have a care, zooks! Mrs. Mechlin.

I. Fun. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match: well pushed, Mrs. Mechlin.

Z. Fun. Ay, but instead of pushing in tierce, she pushed me in carte, and came so thick with her thrusts that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fun. Well, well, I am fully convinced of your skill; but I think, brother Zac, you hinted an intention of marrying; is that your design?

Z. Fun. Undoubtedly.

I. Fun. And when?

Z. Fun. Why, this evening.

I. Fun. So sudden! and pray, is it a secret to whom?

Z. Fun. A secret, no; I am proud of the match; she brings me all I want—her veins full of good blood: such a family! such an alliance! zooks, she has a pedigree as long as the Mall, brother Isaac, with large trees on each side, and all the boughs loaded with lords.

I. Fun. But has the lady no name?

Z. Fun. Name! aye, such a name: lord! we have nothing like it in London: none of your stunted little dwarfish words of one syllable; your Watts, and your Potts, and your Trots; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad wheels. Mrs. Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs. Mech. Lady Sacharissa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fun. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of syllables for you. Lineally descended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, Earl of Glendower, prime minister to King Malcolm the first.

I. Fun. And are all the parties agreed?

Z. Fun. I cannot say quite all; for the right honourable peer that is to be my papa, (who, by-the-by, is as proud as the devil,) has flatly renounced the alliance, calls me here in his letter Plebeian, and says, if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pie-balds.

I. Fun. And what does the gentlewoman say?

Z. Fun. The gentlewoman! Oh, the gentlewoman (who, between ourselves) is pretty near as high as her father; but, however, my person has proved too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fun. Is it resolved?

Z. Fun. Fixed.

I. Fun. I am sorry for it.

Z. Fun. Why so? Come, come, brother Isaac, don't be uneasy, I have a shrewd guess at your grievance; but though you may not be suffered to see Lady *Scracarissa* at first, yet who knows before long I may have interest enough with her to bring it about? and, in the mean time, you may dine when you will with the steward.

I. Fun. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainsay it?

Mrs. Mech. By no means; it is wonderful, considering her rank, how mild and condescending she is: why, but yesterday, says her Ladyship to me, though, Mrs. Mechlin, it can't be supposed that I should admit any of the Fungus family into my presence——

Z. Fun. No, no, to be sure; not at first, as I said.

Mrs. Mech. Yet, his brother, or any other relation may dine with the servants every day.

Z. Fun. Do you hear, Isaac? There's your true, inherent nobility, so humble and affable! But people of real rank never have any pride; that is only for upstarts.

I. Fun. Wonderfully gracious! but here, brother Zac, you mistake me, it is not for myself I am sorry.

Z. Fun. Whom then?

I. Fun. For you. Don't you think that your wife will despise you?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you suppose that you will live together a month?

Z. Fun. Yes.

I. Fun. Why, can you bear to walk about your own house like a paltry dependant?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To have yourself and your orders contemned by your servants?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To see your property devoured by your lady's beggarly cousins, who, notwithstanding, wo'n't vouchsafe you a nod?——

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her sending, come at her calling, dine by yourself when she has bettermost company, and sleep six nights a week in the garret?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Why, will you dare to disobey, have the impudence to dispute the sovereign will and pleasure of a lady like her?

Z. Fun. Aye, marry will I.

I. Fun. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraros, with their naked points at your throat?*

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fun. Look you, brother, I know what you

---

* *Andrew Ferrara* was a celebrated manufacturer of broad swords, which caused this instrument to be called by his name.

would be at: you don't mean I should marry at all.

I. Fun. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I should with pleasure see you *equally matched*, that is, to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fun. You would? I don't doubt it; but that is a pleasure you never will have. Look you, Isaac, I have made up my mind; it is *a lady* I like, and a lady I will have; and if you say any more, I'll not be contented with that, for, damme, I'll marry a duchess.

Enter LA FLEUR.

La Fleur. Le maître pour donner d'éloquence.

Z. Fun. What does the puppy say, Mrs. Mechlin? for you know I can't parler vous.

Mrs. Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a speaker.

Z. Fun. Odzooks! a special fine fellow, let's have him.

Mrs. Mech. Faites l'entrer. [*Exit* LA FLEUR.

I. Fun. Brother, as you are busy, I will take another——

Z. Fun. No, no, this is the finest fellow of all; it is he that is to make me a man; and, hark-ye, brother, if I should chance to rise in the state, no more words, your business is done.

I. Fun. What, I reckon some member of parliament.

Z. Fun. A member! Lord help you, brother Isaac, this man is a whole senate himself. Why it is the famous orationer that has published the book.

I. Fun. What, Mr. Gruel?

Z. Fun. The same.

I. Fun. Yes, I have seen his name in the News.

Z. Fun. His knowledge is wonderful; he has told me such secrets—Why, do you know, Isaac, by what means 'tis we speak?

I. Fun. Speak! why we speak with our mouths.

Z. Fun. No, we don't.

I. Fun. No!

Z. Fun. No. He says, we speak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat; and without them we should only bellow.

I. Fun. But surely the mouth—

Z. Fun. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing, only just a cavity for the air to pass through.

I. Fun. Indeed!

Z. Fun. That's all; and when the cavity's small, little sounds will come out; when large, the great ones proceed: observe now in whistling and bawling—[*whistles and bawls*].—Do you see? Oh, he is a miraculous man.

I. Fun. But of what use is all this?

Z. Fun. But it's knowledge, a'n't it? and of what signification is that, you fool? And then, as to *use*, why, he can make me speak in any manner he pleases; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the subject requires—But here he is.

Enter MR. GRUEL.

Mr. Gruel, your servant; I have been holding forth in your praise.

Gruel. I make no doubt, Mr. Fungus, but to your declamation, or recitation (as Quintilian more properly terms it), I shall be indebted for much future praise; inasmuch as the reputation of the scholar does (as I may say) confer, or rather, as it were, reflect, a marvellous kind of lustre on the fame of the master himself.

Z. Fun. There, Isaac! didst ever hear the like? he talks just as if it were all out of a book; what would you give to be able to utter such words?

I. Fun. And what should I do with them? them *holiday terms* would not pass in my shop;* there's no buying and selling with them.

Gruel. Your observation is pithy and pertinent: different stations different idioms demand; polished periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baser kind of coin, for the ease and convenience of inferior traffic, so is it indulged with a vernacular or vicious vulgar phraseology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce.—But I doubt, sir, I soar above the region of your comprehension?

I. Fun. Why, if you would come down a step or two, I can't say but I should understand you the better.

Z. Fun. And I too.

Gruel. Then to the familiar I fall: if the gentleman has any ambition to shine at a vestry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can supply him with ample materials.

I. Fun. No, I have no such desire.

Gruel. Not to lose time;* your brother here,

---

* *Holiday terms.* A goodly phrase for that affected academic style which has recently made irruptions into the business of common life. Engendered in the book-societies, institutions, lecture-rooms, and forum-meetings of the metropolis, this *outre* inflation forms a style, *sui generis*, scarcely understandable and wholly unanswerable without painful analysis and frequent syncope: it has acquired the appellation of "Cockney Eloquence," and gets much into type *monthly*, with all its verbiage, and occasionally appears in separate volumes.

(for such I find the gentleman is,) in other respects a common man like yourself—

Z. Fun. No better.

Gruel. Observe, how altered by means of my art: are you prepared in the speech on the great importance of trade?

Z. Fun. Pretty well, I believe.

Gruel. Let your gesticulations be chaste, and your muscular movements consistent.

Z. Fun. Never fear——[*Enter* JENNY, *and whispers* MRS. MECHLIN.]—Mrs. Mechlin, you'll stay?

Mrs. Mech. A little business; I'll return in an instant. [*Exit* MRS. MECHLIN.

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you please, sir; there you will only catch his profile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face: one, two, three! now, off you go.

Z. Fun. When I consider the vast importance of this day's debate; when I revolve the various vicissitudes that this soil has sustained; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were; and what we, their civilized successors, are; when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and chestnuts——

Gruel. Pignuts, good sir, if you please.

Z. Fun. You are right; crab-apples and pignuts; and that we feast on green-peas, and on custards; when I trace in the recording historical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now, that we have fish by land-carriage; I am lost in amazement at the prodigious power of commerce. Hail, Commerce! daughter of Industry, consort to Credit, parent of Opulence, full sister to Liberty, and great grandmother to the Art of Navigation——

I. Fun. Why, this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac.

Z. Fun. Prithee, Isaac, be quiet—Art of Navigation—a—a—'vigation——Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out.

Gruel. It matters not; this day's performance has largely fulfilled your yesterday's promise.

Z. Fun. But I ha'n't half done; the best is to come. Let me just give him that part about turnpegs—for the sloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impassable bogs, that the languid, but generous steed travelled through; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole region of turnpegs.

Enter MRS. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Your riding-master is below.

Z. Fun. Gadso! then, here we must end. You'll pardon me, good Mr. Gruel; for, as I want to be a *finished gentleman* as soon as I can, it is impossible for me to stick long to any one thing.

Gruel. Sir, although your exit is rather abrupt, yet the multiplicity of your avocations, do, (as I may say,) in some measure, cicatrise the otherwise mortal wound on this occasion sustained by decorum.

Z. Fun. Cicatrise! I could hear him all day. He is a wonderful man. Well, Mr. Gruel, to-morrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your slightest volition.

Z. Fun. I wish, brother Isaac, I could have staid, you should have heard me *oration away* like a lawyer, about pleadings and presidents; but all in good time. [*Exit* Z. FUNGUS.

Mrs. Mech. This gentleman, sir, will gain you vast credit.

Gruel. Yes, madam, the capabilities of the gentleman, I' confess, are enormous; and, as it is to you I am indebted for this promising pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation, by an instantaneous and gratis lecture on that species of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, sir, I have no sort of occasion—

Gruel. As to that *biped*, man, (for such I define him to be,) a male or masculine manner belongs—

Mrs. Mech. Any other time, good Mr. Gruel.

Gruel. So, to that biped, woman, she participating of his general nature, the word *homo*, in Latin, being promiscuously used for woman or man——

Mrs. Mech. For Heaven's sake——

Gruel. But, being cast in a more tender and delicate mould——

Mrs. Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting——

Gruel. The soft, supple, insinuating graces——

Mrs. Mech. I must insist——

Gruel. Do appertain (as I may say) in a more peculiar, or particular, manner;——

Mrs. Mech. Nay, then——

Gruel. Her rank in the order of entities——

Mrs. Mech. I must thrust you out of my house.

Gruel. Not calling her forth——

Mrs. Mech. Was there ever such a——[*pushing him out.*]

Re-enter GRUEL.

Gruel. To those eminent, hazardous, and (as I may say) perilous conflicts, which so often——

Mrs. Mech. Get down stairs, and be hanged to you—[*pushes him out*]. There he goes, as I live,

from the top to the bottom: I hope, I ha'n't done him a mischief: You ar'n't hurt, Mr. Gruel?—No, all's safe, for I hear him going on with his speech—an impertinent puppy!

I. Fun. Impertinent, indeed: I wonder all those people don't turn your head, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, I am pretty well used to 'em. But who comes here! Mr. Isaac, if you will step into the next room, I have something to communicate that well deserves your attention.

[*Exit* ISAAC FUNGUS.

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Doctor Catgut, at the foot of the stairs.

Mrs. Mech. The devil he is! What can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up while he is here. [*Exit* SIMON.] I hope he has not heard of the pretty present we sent him to day.

Enter DR. CATGUT.

Dr. Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, Madam, received a couple of compliments from your mansion this morning; one I find from a lodger of yours, the other I presume from your niece; but for the last, I rather suppose I am indebted to you.

Mrs. Mech. Me! indeed, Doctor, you are widely mistaken; I assure you, sir, since your business broke out, I have never set eyes on her once.

Dr. Cat. Then I am falsely informed.

Mrs. Mech. But, after all, you must own it is but what you deserve: I wonder, Doctor, you don't leave off those tricks.

Dr. Cat. Why, what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? my constitution requires it.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed! I should not have thought it.

Dr. Cat. Then, the dear little devils are so desperately fond.

Mrs. Mech. Without doubt.

Dr. Cat. And, for frolick, flirtation, diligence, dress, and address——

Mrs. Mech. To be sure.

Dr. Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry, few men, I flatter myself, will be found that can match me.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr. Cat. Hark ye, Molly Mechlin, let me perish, child, you look divinely to day.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed!

Dr. Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I should be positively tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, but Doctor, consider I am not of a trifling age, it would be only losing your time.

Dr. Cat. Ha, so coy! But *a propos*, Molly, this lodger of yours; who is he, and what does he want?

Mrs. Mech. You have heard of the great Mr. Fungus?

Dr. Cat. Well!

Mrs. Mech. Being informed of your skill and abilities, he has sent for you to teach him to sing.

Dr. Cat. Me teach him to sing! What, does the scoundrel mean to affront me?

Mrs. Mech. Affront you!

Dr. Cat. Why don't you know, child, that I have quitted that paltry profession?

Mrs. Mech. Not I.

Dr. Cat. Oh, entirely renounced it.

Mrs. Mech. Then, what may you follow at present?

Dr. Cat. Me!—nothing. I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs. Mech. A poet!

Dr. Cat. A poet. *The muses*—you know I was always fond of the ladies: I suppose you have heard of Shakspeare, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of Milton, and Hudibras?

Mrs. Mech. I have.

Dr. Cat. I shall blast all their laurels, by gad; I have just given the public a taste, but there's a belly-full for them in my larder at home.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, you surprise me: but pray, is poetry a trade to be learned?

Dr. Cat. Doubtless. Capital as I am, I have not acquired it above a couple of years.

Mrs. Mech. And could you communicate your art to another?

Dr. Cat. To be sure. Why, I have here in my pocket, my dear, a whole folio of rhymes from Z quite to great A. Let us see, A, ay, here it begins: A, ass, pass, grass, mass, lass, and so quite through the alphabet down to Z. Zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs. Mech. And what do you do with those rhymes?

Dr. Cat. Oh, we supply them.

Mrs. Mech. Supply them?

Dr. Cat. Ay, fill them up, as I will show you. Last week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made these rhymes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the stocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that sort of writing. First she—

> There to see the sluggish ass,
> Through the meadows as we pass,
> Eating up the farmer's grass,
> Blithe and merry, by the mass,
> As a lively country lass.

Mrs. Mech. Very pretty.

Dr. Cat. A'n't it! Then he replies,

> Hear the farmer cry out, zounds!
> As he trudges through the grounds,
> Yonder beast has broke my mounds;
> If the parish has no pounds,
> Kill, and give him to the hounds.

Then, *da capo*, both join in repeating the last stanza; and this tacked to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You observe?

Mrs. Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is desirous to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr. Cat. In that case, he may command me, my dear; and I promise you, in a couple of months, he shall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs. Mech. At present he is a little engaged, but as soon as the honey-moon is over——

Dr. Cat. Honey-moon! Why, is he going to be married?

Mrs. Mech. This evening, I fancy.

Dr. Cat. The finest opportunity for an introduction in nature. I have by me, Ma'am Mechlin, of my own composition, such an epithalamium——

Mrs. Mech. Thalmium, what's that?

Dr. Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compose at the solemnization of weddings.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, oh!

Dr. Cat. It is set to music already; for I still compose for myself.

Mrs. Mech. You do?

Dr. Cat. Yes. What think you, now, of providing a band, and serenading the 'Squire to-night? It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs. Mech. The prettiest thought in the world. But I hear Mr. Fungus's bell. You'll excuse me, dear Doctor, you may suppose we are busy.

Dr. Cat. No apology, then,—I'll about it this instant.

Mrs. Mech. As soon as you please;—any thing to get you out of the way. [*Aside and exit.*

Dr. Cat. Your obsequious, good Madam Mechlin. But, notwithstanding all your fine speeches, I shrewdly suspect my blessed bargain at home was a present from you; and what shall I do with it? —These little *embarrasses* we men of intrigue are eternally subject to. There will be no sending it back. She will never let it enter the house.—Hey! gad, a lucky thought is come into my head ——this serenade is finely contrived——Madam Mechlin shall have her cousin again, for I will return her by-blow in the body of a double bass-viol; so the Bawd shall have a concert as well as the 'Squire———— [*Exit* DR. CATGUT.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE—continues.

Enter HARPY, YOUNG LOVEIT, *and* JENNY.

Har. Tell your mistress my name is Harpy; she knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr. Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn? [*Exit* JENNY.

Har. The same. Ay, ay, young gentleman, this is your woman; I warrant your business is

done. You knew Kitty Williams, that married Mr. Abednego Potiphar, the Jew broker?

Y. Lov. I did.

Har. And Robin Rainbow, the happy husband of the widow Champansy, from the island of St. Kitt's?

Y. Lov. I have seen him.

Har. All owing to her. Her success in that branch of business is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, since last summer, she has not sent off less than forty couple to Edinburgh.

Y. Lov. Indeed! She must be very adroit.

Har. Adroit! You shall judge; I will tell you a case; you know the large brick house at Peckham, with a turret at top?

Y. Lov. Well.

Har. There lived Miss Cicely Mite, the only daughter of old Mite, the cheesemonger, at the corner of Newgate-street, just turned of fourteen and under the wing of an old maiden aunt, as watchful as a dragon—but hush—I hear Mrs. Mechlin, I'll take another season to finish my tale.

Y. Lov. But, Mr. Harpy, as these kind of women are a good deal given to gossipping, I would rather my real name was a secret till there is a sort of necessity.

Har. Gossipping! She, lord help you, she is as close as a Catholic confessor.

Y. Lov. That may be, but you must give me leave to insist.

Har. Well, well, as you please.

Enter MRS. MECHLIN.

Your very humble servant, good Madam Mechlin; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your assistance.

Mrs Mech. Any friend of yours, Mr. Harpy; —wo'n't you be seated, sir?

Y. Lov. Ma'am. [*They sit down.*

Mrs. Mech. And pray, sir, how can I serve you?

Har. Why, madam, the gentleman's situation is——but, sir, you had better state your case to Mrs. Mechlin yourself.

Y. Lov. Why, you are to know, madam, that I am just escaped from the university, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly esteemed.

Mrs. Mech. Very obliging. I must own, sir, I have had a very great respect for that learned body, ever since they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of music.

Y. Lov. Yes, madam, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. Do you know him, sir? I expect him here every minute, to instruct a lodger of mine.

Y. Lov. Not intimately. Just arrived, but last night; upon my coming to town I found my father deceased, and all his fortune devised to his relict, my mother.

Mrs. Mech. What, the whole!

Y. Lov. Every shilling—that is, for her life.

Mrs. Mech. And to what sum may it amount?

Y. Lov. Why, my mother is eternally telling me, that, after her, I shall inherit fifty or sixty thousand at least.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, a capital sum.

Y. Lov. But of what use, my dear Mrs. Mechlin, since she refuses to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it, and while the grass grows—you know the proverb—

Mrs. Mech. What, I suppose you want something for present subsistence.

Y. Lov. Just my situation.

Mrs. Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourself?

Y. Lov. I am resolved to be guided by you.

Mrs. Mech. What do you think of a wife?

Y. Lov. A wife!

Mrs. Mech. Come, come, don't despise my advice: when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better resource than a usurer; and there are in this town a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleasure in repairing the injuries done by fortune to handsome young fellows.

Har. Mrs. Mechlin has reason.

Y. Lov. But, dear ma'am, what can I do with a wife?

Mrs. Mech. Do! Why, like other young fellows, who marry ladies a little stricken in years; make her your banker and steward. If you say but the word, before night I'll give you a widow with two thousand a year in her pocket.

Y. Lov. Two thousand a year! a pretty employment, if residence could be dispensed with.

Mrs. Mech. What do you mean by residence? Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful trader, is to be eternally tacked to his wife's petticoat? when she is in town, be you in the country; as she shifts, do you shift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year; and let me tell you, you wo'n't find a more easy condition: twelve months' subsistence for one month's labour!

Y. Lov. Two thousand a year, you are sure?

Mrs. Mech. The least penny.

Y. Lov. Well, madam, you shall dispose of me just as you please.

Mrs. Mech. Very well; if you will call in

half an hour at furthest, I believe we shall finish the business.

Y. Lov. In half an hour?

Mrs. Mech. Precisely. Oh, despatch is the very life and soul of my trade. Mr. Harpy will tell you my terms, you will find them reasonable enough.

Har. Oh, I am sure we shall have no dispute about those.

Y. Lov. No, no,——[*Going.*]

Mrs. Mech. Oh, but Mr. Harpy, it may be proper to mention, that the gentlewoman, the party, is upwards of sixty.

Y. Lov. With all my heart: it is the purse, not the person, I want: Sixty! she is quite a girl; I wish with all my soul she was ninety.

Mrs. Mech. Get you gone, you are a devil, I see that.

Y. Lov. Well, for half an hour, sweet Mrs. Mechlin, adieu.

[*Exeunt* YOUNG LOVEIT *and* HARPY.

Mrs. Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonshire-square; and now to cater for my Commissary. Here he comes.

Enter FUNGUS *and* BRIDOUN.

Fun. So, in six weeks——Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs. Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conscious that in this step she descends from her dignity; but being desirous to screen you from the fury of her noble relations, she is determined to let them see that the act and deed is entirely her own.

Fun. Very kind, very obliging, indeed. But,

Mrs. Mechlin, as the family is so furious, I reckon we shall never be reconciled.

Mrs. Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought commissions for her three younger brothers, discharged the mortgage on the paternal estate, and portioned off eight or nine of her sisters, it is not impossible but my lord may be prevailed upon to suffer your name——

Fun. Do you think so?

Mrs. Mech. But then, a work of time, Mr. Fungus.

Fun. Ay, ay, I know very well things of that kind are not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. But I must prepare matters for the lady's reception.

Fun. By all means. The jewels are sent to her ladyship?

Mrs. Mech. To be sure.

Fun. And the ring for her ladyship, and her ladyship's license?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyship's parson, too; all are prepared.

Fun. Parson! why, wo'n't her ladyship please to be married at Powl's?

Mrs. Mech. Lord, Mr. Fungus, do you think a lady of her rank and condition could bear to be seen in public, at once, with a person like you?

Fun. That's true; I——

Mrs. Mech. No, no; I have sent to Dr. Ticklet-ext, and the business will be done in the parlour below.

Fun. As you and her ladyship pleases, good Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. You will get dressed as soon as you can.

Fun. I shall only take a short lesson from Mr.

Bridoun, and then wait her ladyship's pleasure. Mrs. Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, provided his being so is kept a secret from her.

Fun. Never fear.——[*Exit* MRS. MECHLIN.] Well, Mr. Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little?

Brid. A great deal.

Fun. And, that in a month or six weeks I may be able to prance upon a long-tailed horse in Hyde-park, without any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fun. It will be vast pleasant, in the heat of the day, to canter along the King's Road, side by side with the ladies, in the thick of the dust; but that I must not hope for this summer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it close.

Fun. Never fear, I sha'n't be sparing of——But come, come, let us get to our business——John, have the carpenters brought home my new horse?

Enter JOHN.

John. It is here, sir, upon the top of the stairs.

Fun. Then fetch it in, in an instant. [*Exit* JOHN.] What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr. Bridoun, to the making a gentleman. And do your gentlemen born, now, (for I reckon you have had of all sorts,) take as much pains as we do?

Brid. To be sure; but they begin at an earlier age.

Fun. There is something in that; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuterer, now, in catching their learning.

Brid. Dispositions do certainly differ.

Fun. Ay, ay, something in nater, I warrant, as

they say the children of blackamoors will swim as soon as they come into the world.

Enter SERVANTS *with a wooden Horse.*

Oh, here he is,—odds me! it is a stately fine beast.

Brid. Here, my lads, place it here——very well; where's your switch, Mr. Fungus?

Fun. I have it.

Brid. Now, let me see you vault nimbly into your seat.—Zounds! you are got on the wrong side, Mr. Fungus.

Fun. I am so indeed, but we'll soon rectify that. Now we are right: may I have leave to lay hold of the mane?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fun. I will try; but this steed is so devilish tall! —Mr. Bridoun, you don't think he'll throw me?

Brid. Never fear.

Fun. Well, if he should, he can't kick; that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now, mind your position.

Fun. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fun. There.

Brid. And your shoulders fall easily back.

Fun. Ho——there.

Brid. Your switch perpendicular in your right hand——your right——that is it; your left to the bridle.

Fun. There.

Brid. Your knees in and your toes out.*

Fun. There.

* *Toes out.*—So in the original; but master Bridoun must have erred on this point of the *manege*, or the author was no rider—as, indeed, *the fact* turned out in the year following, when he was thrown and fractured a leg!

Brid. Are you ready?

Fun. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fun. Don't let him gallop at first.

Brid. Very well: preserve your position.

Fun. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you easy?

Fun. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr. Bridoun, I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fun. Ay, ay, I can't think but this here horse stands still very near as fast as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fun. Ho, stop the horse. Zounds! I'm out of the stirrups, I can't sit him no longer; there I go——— [*Falls off.*

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt?

Fun. My left hip has a little contusion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident; it might happen to the very best rider in England.

Fun. Indeed!

Brid. We have such things happen every day at the *manege;* but you are vastly improved.

Fun. Why, I am grown bolder a little; and, Mr. Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a live horse?

Brid. The very instant you are able to keep your seat on a dead one.

Enter MRS. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Bless me, Mr. Fungus, how you are trifling your time! I expect Lady Sacharissa every moment, and see what a trim you are in.

Fun. I beg pardon, good madam Mechlin. I'll be equipped in a couple of minutes. Where will her ladyship please to receive ——?

Mrs. Mech. In this room, to be sure; come, stir, stir!

Fun. I have had a little fall from my horse.—I'll go as fast as I——Mr. Bridoun, will you lend me a lift? [*Exeunt* FUNGUS *and* BRIDOUN.

Mrs. Mech. There——Jenny, show Mrs. Loveit in here——Who's there————

Enter SERVANTS.

Pray move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haste. Madam, if you'll step in here for a moment.

Enter MRS. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, Mrs. Mechlin—well, you see I am true to my time, and how have you throve, my good woman?

Mrs. Mech. Beyond expectation.

Mrs. Lov. Indeed! And have you provided a party?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and such a party, you might search the town round before you could meet with his fellow: he'll suit you in every respect.

Mrs. Lov. As how, as how, my dear woman!

Mrs. Mech. A gentleman by birth and by breeding, none of your little whipper-snapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a presence as portly! He has one fault, indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs. Lov. What is it?

Mrs. Mech. His age.

Mrs. Lov. Age! how, how?

Mrs. Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid; not above twenty at most.

Mrs. Lov. Well, well, so he answers in every thing else, we must overlook that; for, Mrs.

Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection *below*.

Mrs. Mech. True, ma'am.

Mrs. Lov. And where is he?

Mrs. Mech. I look for him every minute; if you will but step into the drawing-room, I have given him such a picture, that I am sure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs. Lov. My dear woman, you are so kind and obliging: but, Mrs. Mechlin, how do I look? don't flatter me, do you think my figure will strike him?

Mrs. Mech. Or he must be blind.

Mrs. Lov. You may just hint black don't become me, that I am a little paler of late; the loss of a husband one loves will cause an alteration, you know.

Mrs. Mech. True; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs. Lov. But things will come round in a trice. [*Exit* MRS. LOVEIT.

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Madam, Miss Dolly is dizened out, and every thing ready.

Mrs. Mech. Let her wait for the Commissary here; I will introduce him the instant he is dressed. [*Exit* MRS. MECHLIN.

Sim. Miss Dolly, you may come in; your aunt will be here in an instant.

Enter DOLLY *and* JENNY.

Dolly. Hush, Simon, hush; to your post.

Sim. I am gone——— [*Exit* SIMON.

Dolly. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality air?

Jen. As perfectly, ma'am, as if you had been bred to the business; and for figure, I defy the first of them all. For my part, I think Mr. Fungus very well off: when the secret comes out, I don't see what right he has to be angry.

Dolly. Oh, when once he is noosed, let him struggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we may trust to your management. I hope, miss, I shall have the honour to follow your fortunes; there will be no bearing this house, when once you have left it.

Dolly. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of so useful a second; besides, for mistress and maid, we rather know one another a little too well.

Jen. Indeed!—but here comes Mr. Fungus; remember, distance and dignity.

Dolly. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I see what I have to hope. Our young filly seems to be secure of her match; but I may jostle her the wrong side the post: we will have a trial, however; but I must see and find out the brother. [*Aside.*

Enter Z. FUNGUS *and* MRS. MECHLIN.

Fun. Yes, scarlet is vastly becoming, and takes very much with the ladies; quite proper, too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs. Mech. Stay where you are, till you are announced to the lady. Mr. Fungus begs leave to throw himself at your ladyship's feet.

Dolly. The mon may dra' nigh.

Mrs. Mech. Approach.

Fun. One, two, three, ha! Will that do?

Mrs. Mech. Pretty well.

Fun. May I begin to make love?

Mrs. Mech. When you will.

Fun. Now, stand my friend, Mr. Gruel! But she has such a deal of dignity that she dashes me quite.

Mrs. Mech. Courage.

Fun. Here, hold the paper to prompt me, in case I should stumble—Madam, or, may it please your ladyship, when I preponderate the grander of your high ginnyalogy, and the mercantile meanness of my dingy descent; when I consider that your ancestors, like Admiral Anson, sailed all round the world in the ark, and that it is a matter of doubt whether I ever had any forefathers or no; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts of my towering ambition. Ah—a, is not Phäeton next?——

Mrs. Mech. Hey!——[*Looking at the paper*] no, Luna.

Fun. Right;—ambition. Dignity how debased! Distance how great! it is as if the link should demand an alliance with Luna, or the bushy bramble court the boughs of the stately Scotch fir: it is as if——What's next?

Mrs. Mech. Next—hey!——I have lost the place I am afraid.—Come, come, enough has been said; you have showed the sense you entertain of the honour. Upon these occasions, a third person is fittest to cut matters short. Your ladyship hears that——

Dolly. Yes, yes, I ken weel enough what the mon would be at. Mrs. Mechlin has speard sike things in your great commendations, Mr. Fungus, that I canno' but say I clik'd a fancy to you from the very beginning.

Fun. Much obliged to Mrs. Mechlin, indeed, please your la'ship——

Dolly. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North-Britain can boast.

Fun. I know it full well, please your la'ship.

Dolly. And that I shall get the ill-wull of a' my kin by this match.

Fun. I am sorry for that, please your la'ship.

Dolly. But, after the ceremony, it will be proper to withdra' from town for a short space o' time.

Fun. Please your la'ship, what your la'ship pleases.

Dolly. In order to gi' that gossip, Scandal, just time to tire her tongue.

Fun. True, your la'ship,

Dolly. I mun expect that the folk will mak' free wi' my character in choosing sike a consort as you.

Fun. And with me, too, please your la'ship.

Dolly. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs. Mech. Hold your tongue.

Dolly. Donna you think the honour will dra' mickle envy upon you?

Fun. Oh, to be sure, please your la'ship. I did not mean that.

Dolly. Weel, I say, we'll gang into the country.

Fun. As soon as your la'ship pleases; I have a sweet house hard by Reading.

Dolly. You ha'! that's right.

Fun. One of the most pleasantest places that can be again.

Dolly. Ha' you a good prospect?

Fun. Twenty stage-coaches drive every day by the door, besides carts and gentlemen's carriages.

Dolly. Ah, that will——

Mrs. Mech. Oh, your ladyship will find all

things prepared; in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fun. The honour of your la'ship's hand——

Dolly. Maister Fungus, you're a little too hasty. [*Exit* DOLLY.

Mrs. Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you must not expect to be too familiar at first.

Fun. Pray, when do you think we shall bring the bedding about?

Mrs. Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter sets in.

Fun. Not before!

Enter YOUNG LOVEIT.

Y. Lov. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr. Harpy would call.

Mrs. Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr. Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the same hands, after you.

Fun. He's heartily welcome—What, and is his wife a woman of quality too?

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a cit; but monstrously rich: but your lady will wonder——

Fun. Ay, ay, but you'll follow; for I sha'n't know what to say to her when we are alone.— [*Exit* FUNGUS.

Mrs. Mech. I will send you, sir, your spouse in an instant: the gentlewoman is a widow, so you may throw in what raptures you please.

Y. Lov. Never fear. [*Exit* MRS. MECHLIN. ——And yet this scene is so new—how to acquit myself—let me recollect—some piece of a play now.—"Vouchsafe, divine perfection"—No, that

wo'n't do for a dowager; it is too humble and whining. But see, the door opens, so I have no time for rehearsal——I have it—

" Clasp'd in the folds of love I'll meet my doom,
" And act my "——

Enter MRS. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. Hah!

Y. Lov. By all that's monstrous, my mother!

Mrs. Lov. That rebel, my son, as I live!

Y. Lov. The quotation was quite a-propos: had it been a little darker, I might have revived the story of Œdipus.

Mrs. Lov. So, sirrah, what makes you from your studies?

Y. Lov. A small hint I received of your inclinations brought me here, madam, in order to prevent, if possible, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs. Lov. Your father! how dare you disturb his dear ashes! you know well enough how his dear memory melts me; and that at his very name my heart is ready to break.

Y. Lov. Well said, my old matron of Ephesus.

Mrs. Lov. That is what you want, you disobedient, unnatural monster; but complete, accomplish your cruelty: send me the same road your villanies forced your father to take.

Enter MRS. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Hey-day! What the deuce have we here; our old lady in tears!

Mrs. Lov. Disappointed a little, that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Pray, ma'am, what can occasion—

Mrs. Lov. Lord bless me, Mrs. Mechlin, what a blunder you have made!

Mrs. Mech. A blunder! as how?

Mrs. Lov. Do you know who you have brought me?

Mrs. Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs. Lov. My own son! that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Your son!

Mrs. Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural—

Mrs. Mech. Blunder indeed! but who could have thought it? Why, by your account, ma'am, I imagined your son was a child scarce out of his frocks.

Mrs. Lov. Here's company coming, so my reputation will be blasted for ever.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, leave the care on't to me.

Enter FUNGUS *and* DOLLY.

Fun. What is the matter?—you make such a noise, there is no such thing as minding the writings.

Mrs. Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having set her eyes on her son since the death of his father, and being apprised by me that here she might meet with him, came with a true paternal affection to give him a little wholesome advice.

Mrs. Lov. Well said, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Which the young man returned in a way so brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother—be comforted, ma'am; you had better repose on my bed—

Mrs. Lov. Any where to get out of his sight.

Mrs. Mech. Here, Jenny——

Mrs. Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party?

Mrs. Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs. Lov. Ugh, ugh——[*Coughing* } *Exeunt.*
Mrs. Mech. Bear up a little, ma'am. }

Fun. Fy upon you! you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the stericks.

Y. Lov. Sir!

Fun. You a man, you are a scandal, a shame to your sect.

Enter DR. CATGUT.

Dr. Cat. Come, come, Mrs. Mechlin, are the couple prepared?—The fiddles are tuned, the bows ready rosined, and the whole band—Oh, you, sir, are one party I reckon, but where is the——Ah, Dolly, what are you here, my dear?

Dolly. Soh!

Fun. Dolly! Who the devil can this be?

Dr. Cat. As nice and as spruce, too—the bride-maid, I warrant—why, you look as blooming, you slut.

Fun. What can this be? hark-ye, sir!

Dr. Cat. Well, sir.

Fun. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr. Cat. Rank and condition!—what, Dolly?

Fun. Dolly! what a plague possesses the man?—this is no Dolly, I tell you.

Dr. Cat. No!

Fun. No, this is Lady Scracarissa Makirkincroft.

Dr. Cat. Who?

Fun. Descended from the old, old, old earl of Glendowery.

Dr. Cat. What she—Dolly Mechlin?

Fun. Dolly Devil! the man's out of his wits, I believe.

Enter MRS. MECHLIN.

Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, will you set this matter to rights?

Mrs. Mech. How, Dr. Catgut!

Fun. The strangest fellow here! has danced upstairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dolly'd my lady, who the plague can he be?

Dr. Cat. Oh, *a-propos*, Molly Mechlin, what, is this the man that is to be married? The marriage will never hold good; why he is more frantic and madder—

Fun. Mad! John, fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you scoundrel.

Enter ISAAC FUNGUS *and* JENNY.

I. Fun. Where's brother?—it a'n't over; 'a be'n't married, I hope.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; why, what is the—

I. Fun. Pretty hands you are got into. Your servant, good madam; what, this is the person, I warrant; aye, how pretty the puppet is painted! do you know who she is?

Z. Fun. Who she is? without doubt.

I. Fun. No, you don't, brother Zac; only the spawn of that devil incarnate, dressed out as——

Z. Fun. But hark-ye, Isaac, are—don't be in a hurry—are you sure?

I. Fun. Sure—the girl of the house, abhorring their scandalous project, has freely confessed the whole scheme. Jenny, stand forth, and answer boldly to what I shall ask: Is not this wench the woman's niece of the house?

Jen. I fancy she will hardly deny it.

I. Fun. And is not this mistress of yours a most profligate——

Mrs. Mech. Come, come, Master Isaac, I will save you the trouble, and cut this matter short in an instant—Well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fun. And ar'n't you ashamed!

Y. Lac. She ashamed! I would have told you, but I could not get you to listen; why, she brought me here to marry my mother.

Z. Fun. Marry your mother! Lord have mercy on us, what a monster! to draw a young man in to be guilty of incense. But, hark-ye, brother Isaac, [*they retire*]———

Dr. Cat. Gads my life, what a sweet project I have helped to destroy! But come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again: thou hast a good pretty voice; I'll teach thee a thrill and a shake; perch thee amongst the boughs at one of the gardens; and then as a mistress, which, as the world goes, is a much better station than that of a wife, not the proudest of them all——

Mrs. Mech. Mistress! No, no, we have not managed our matters so badly. Hark-ye, Mr. Commissary.

Z. Fun. Well, what do you want?

Mrs. Mech. Do you propose to consummate your nuptials?

Z. Fun. That's a pretty question, indeed.

Mrs. Mech. You have no objection, then, to paying the penalty, the contract here, that Mr. Harpy has drawn.

Z. Fun. The contract, hey, brother Isaac?

I. Fun. Let me see it.

Mrs. Mech. Soft you, there, my maker of candles, it is as well where it is; but you need not doubt of its goodness: I promise you the best advice has been taken.

Z. Fun. What a damned fiend I what a harpy!

Mrs. Mech. And why so, my good master Fungus? Is it because I have practised that trade by retail which you have carried on in *the gross*? What injury do I do the world? I feed on their folly, 'tis true; and the game, the plunder, is fair: but the fangs of you, and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel.
To their candour and justice I make my appeal:
Though a poor humble scourge in a national cause,
As I trust I deserve, I demand your applause.

END OF VOL. II.

MARCHANT, PRINTER, INGRAM-COURT, LONDON.

00046617

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016